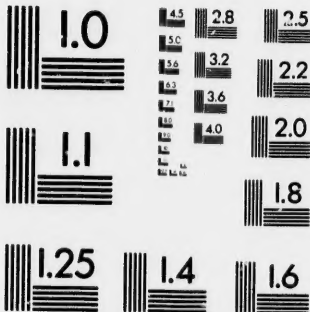


MICROCOPY RESOLUTION TEST CHART

(ANSI and ISO TEST CHART No. 2)



APPLIED IMAGE Inc

1653 East Main Street
Rochester, New York 14609 USA
(716) 482 - 0300 - Phone
(716) 288 - 5989 - Fax

OP

PR

DISSERTATIONS
ON THE
OPENING OF THE SEALED BOOK;
ILLUSTRATING
THE PROPHETIC SIGNS
USED IN
DANIEL AND THE REVELATION.

PRINTED FROM A TRANSCRIPT OF THE PAPERS SIGNED
BIBLICUS,
PUBLISHED IN THE LONDON STAR.

WITH ADDITIONAL NOTES.

MONTREAL:
PRINTED BY J. C. BECKET, 211½, ST. PAUL STREET.

MDCCCLXVIII.

WIT
given to
1809, i
it cannot
Author

SIR,

7
fane app
which I
that you
this conv
on an im

When
life glides
heedless
world.
when the
nature, an
mind is ag
of those
feeling tha
afflicted th
their thoug
of complet
which I c
not only ap
eyes, but h
accomplish
fulfilled.
transaction
quently hap

PREFACE.

WITH some exceptions of small moment, the following work was given to the public, in the *London Star*, during the years 1808 and 1809, in thirty-three Numbers, each signed BIBLICUS; and perhaps it cannot be better Prefaced than by the first Number, containing the Author's Address:—

TO THE EDITOR OF THE STAR.

SIR,

The judicious quotations of Scripture, uncontaminated by profane applications, and unsophisticated by an enthusiastic imagination, which I have frequently observed in your paper, induce me to think that you feel a sincere regard for the great truths of religion. Under this conviction, I beg leave to offer to your readers a series of papers on an important subject—*The Fulfilment of the Prophecies*.

When the political hemisphere is unclouded—when the bark of life glides smoothly over an unruffled sea—the mind is lulled in security, heedless of the great events which are silently brooding over the world. But when the storms arise, and the thunder is ready to burst; when the judgments of Heaven threaten to overturn the order of nature, and involve nations in a whirlwind of desolation; then the mind is agitated; and endeavours to trace the causes and the progress of those tremendous revolutions. It is under the impression of this feeling that, since the fearful events which have lately astonished and afflicted the world, men of a contemplative disposition have turned their thoughts to the Prophecies which they believed to be on the eve of completion.—Some of them have built their systems on grounds which I conceive to be erroneous, if not presumptuous. They have not only applied some prophecies to the events passing before their eyes, but have ventured to determine the exact periods of the future accomplishment of others, and the very way in which they must be fulfilled. But as men naturally affix the greatest importance to the transactions, circumstances, and times in which they live, it has frequently happened that succeeding interpreters have proved the error

CONTENTS.

INTRODUCTION: General remarks on the fulfilment of prophecy and the divine authority of the Scriptures, pages 1, 2.—The book of Revelation not mysteriously unintelligible, —characters of Antichrist not solely applicable to the Church of Rome, 3, 4.

THE REVELATION—In what manner it was made to John, 4.—Of John's address, 4, 5.—Of the voice which he heard, 5, 6.—Of the first vision, and how he was affected by it, 6, 7.

EPISTLES to the Asiatic churches prophetic, and correspond with the after parts of the book, 8.—Respectively noticed, 9—12.

THE VOICE again calls to John, and he is transported to heaven—his description of this scene of following visions, 12—14.

THE SEALED BOOK—Characters of him who could open it, 14.—How it was written, and what part was visible—import of its being sealed, and number of the seals, 15.—Contained a complete prophecy of the purposes of God—how long it was to remain sealed—now an open book, 16.—Impossible to be understood by the common interpretations given of the leading objects in it, 16, 17.—The Prince of the Host, &c., 18.—The writings of Daniel and John adapted to each other, &c., 19.

THE FIRST SEAL—(What signified by the *white* horse, 186.)—Crowned warrior, who he is, and what his warfare, 20—23.—Summary of what the opening of this seal reveals, 23.

SECOND SEAL—Signification of the *red* horse—answerable to the character of Esau, 25.—When the rider commenced his work, 26.—What instruction this seal affords, 26.

THIRD SEAL—Import of the *black* horse, and of the rider's *balances* or *yoke*, 27.—Character and conduct of the men alluded to, and how far restrained, 28, 29.

FOURTH SEAL—Nature of the *death* brought to view, 30.—Power of this and the two former riders, 30, 31.

FIFTH SEAL—Import of what it displays, 31.—Mistakes of the Jews, &c., respecting the Messiah and his kingdom, 32, 33.

SIXTH SEAL—Import of the language, and to whom it refers, 34.—What earthquake and what day is here spoken of, 35—38.—Has no relation to the period to which commentators have generally applied it, 39, 40.—What the 7th chapter of the Revelation instructs, 41, 42.—Brief account of the opening of the first six seals, 42, 43.—Erroneous systems of interpretation noticed, 43, 44.—When the courses of the riders commenced, and when they shall be finished, 45.

SEVENTH SEAL.—Of the heaven and the half hour—the Angel at the altar, and of the import of what he did, 45, 46.

FIRST TRUMPET.—Explanation of the figures and language, 48.—Denote strife and war excited by the religious, 48.—Of the commencement, extent, and continuance of these evils, 49—50.

SECOND TRUMPET.—Of the different significations of the figures employed, 51, 52.—Of the great mountain: the fire in its bowels, and the sea into which it was cast, 52—58.—Of the evils which resulted from the great mountain burning with fire being cast into the sea, 58—64.

THIRD TRUMPET.—Its subject of much importance, but generally misunderstood—the exposition divided into Sections, 66.

PART I. *Sect. I.* Of the figures employed, and the general import of the expressions: they relate to the church—meaning of the word *church*, 66—70.—Remarks on the formation of the first Christian congregations, 70.—Their corruption the subject of this trumpet, 71.

Sect. II. Of whom the primitive Christian assemblies were composed, and how the members were admitted into fellowship, 72, 73.

Sect. III. Of government.—Of the office-bearers in the church; and first, of bishops and presbyters, with notes on the word *ordain*, &c. 73—76.—Number of believers necessary to constitute a church, and their duty as such, 77, 78.

Sect. IV. Of the election of bishops or presbyters, and their duties; with an illustration of the *charge* or the *gift* given to Timothy by prophecy, 1 Tim. i. 18, &c.—and of Clement's version of Isa. lx. 11, &c., 78—83.

Sect. V. Of deacons, male and female; their election and their duties, 83—86.

Sect. VI. Of the independence of the Christian congregations established by the Apostles, 86, 88.

Sect. VII. Of the public meetings of the primitive Christians, with the duties to be performed by the elders and other members, 88—94.

Sect. VIII. Of the liberality enjoined to be practised by Christian assemblies, 94—97.

Sect. IX. Of discipline—comprehensive nature of the law for conducting it, 97—101.

Sect. X. Of the end intended to be gained by a strict observance of the laws of Christ among his followers.—Of Christ's sovereignty, 101—107.

FOUR
sec
an
em

INTRO
tha
mia

Paul's
—C
the
mea
156
char
—C

FIFTH
erron
160—
163—

Sec
abyss

Sec
Arabia
What
scorpio

THIRD TRUMPET—PART II. Causes which operated to corrupt the rivers and fountains of waters—the Christian churches, 108.

Sect. I. Deviations from the Apostolic practice respecting converts—Episcopal usurpation in its infancy.—The primitive use of the word *parish* changed, 108—111.

Sect. II. Farther progress of ecclesiastical tyranny.—Nature of the means employed to establish it, 113—116.

Sect. III. Of schism and heresy—showing the Apostolic application of the words, and how differently ecclesiastics have used them, 117—122.

Sect. IV. Of the origin of the clerical body—by misapplications of the Greek words *cleros*, *laos*, *ecclesia*, &c.—Source of the meetings called *synods*, 122—127.

Sect. V. Of the steps that more directly led to the establishment of ecclesiastical dominion.—Origin of diocese, cathedral, deanery, dean, metropolitan, primate, patriarch, &c., 127—131.

Sect. VI. Of the contest maintained between the bishops of Rome and Constantinople for supremacy, 131—137.

FOURTH TRUMPET—Considered as an extension of the subject of the second, and as predicting the annihilation of the imperial power, and the division of the sovereignty and territories of the Roman empire, 137—149.

INTRODUCTION TO THE WOE TRUMPETS—They denote greater evils than those signified by any of the preceding.—Of the *eagle*, the *mid-heaven*, &c., 149—151.

Paul's Prophecy of the Man of Sin—Of the falling away, 152, 153.—Of the man of sin—his assumed supremacy over all kings, and in the church, as God, 153.—The designation, *the man of sin*, not meant for an individual, 155, 156.—Import of the word *mystery*, 156.—When the wicked one was revealed, 157.—Part of the characters of the Church of Rome applicable to many others, 158.—Consumption and destruction of Antichrist, 159.

FIFTH TRUMPET—*Sect. I.* Of the language employed, and the erroneous interpretations generally given of it by commentators, 160—162.—Remarks on the nature of hieroglyphical language, 163—166.

Sect. II. Of the fallen star, and the opening of the pit of the abyss; and of the smoke which issued from the pit, 166—173.

Sect. III. Of the locusts, and the power given to them.—The Arabians not the men intended by the locusts or their crowns.—What men the locusts symbolized.—Character denoted by the scorpion, 173—179.

Sect. IV. Of the command given to the locusts, and how it was fulfilled by the men whom they represented, 179—182.—Of the effects of their torment, men sought death but could not find it, 182—185.

Sect. V. Description of the locusts.—How likened to horses, and what the nature of their crowns—their hair and faces, 185—188.—Of their breastplates and the sound of their wings, 189, 190.—Decline of their power, 191.



As the Foot Notes which have been added by the Editor may not be all distinguishable from those of "Biblicus," the omission of some mark may be remedied by the following List of them:—

	PAGE.
On the Lion of the Tribe of Judah, &c., - - -	14-5
On the characters of Esau and the Edomites, - - -	25
On the yoke or balances, (first nine lines) - - -	27
On the silence for the space of half an hour, - - -	45-6
Two lines, - - -	51
On soliciting offices of worldly honour, - - -	60
Three lines, - - -	70
Five lines, - - -	71
On the Elder the husband of one wife, - - -	74-5
Five lines subjoined to the Author's note on <i>ordain</i> , - - -	76
First two lines, - - -	77
First three lines, - - -	88
Twenty-six lines subjoined to the Author's note, - - -	90
On the Lord's law of discipline, - - -	98
On the characters to be cut off from the church, - - -	100
Three lines, - - -	102
On the strange woman, - - -	107-8
On treading of the Holy City under foot, - - -	108
On the assembling of Christians, - - -	113
On the word <i>order</i> , - - -	125
Two lines, - - -	150
On the mystery of iniquity, - - -	152
Five lines, - - -	153-
The quotations subjoined to the Author's references, - - -	157
On the Divine presence and its effects, - - -	159-60
On the fallen star, - - -	167
On the prevalence of the spirit of the locusts, - - -	181
Three lines, - - -	186
Seven lines, - - -	188
First four lines, - - -	189

THE
whic
take
result
partia
fulfil
they v
the pr
them
event
precise
it mus
rests o
It is
in gene
which
them in
prescri
Testam
able co
the Me
resurre
been fo
professe
the trut
rest of t
and the
argumen

ts, and how it
79—182.—Of
ould not find it,

ed to horses,
faces, 185—
ings, 189, 190.

or may not be
ission of some
—

THE SEALED BOOK OPENED.

INTRODUCTION.

BY BIBLICUS.

THE fulfilment of Prophecy is an argument for the truth of Revelation, which cannot be overthrown by its adversaries ; for, events which take place many centuries after they were predicted, cannot be the result of combination and imposture. If a few facts fell out partially applicable, either as to their nature or the time of their fulfilment, there might be some plausibility in the objection, "that they were merely the accidental result of contingencies;" for either the prophecies are *wholly true*, or *wholly false*. But, when we see them receive their accomplishment in every part, not only as to the event foretold, but in coincidence with a specified time, and all in the precise order in which the events were appointed to follow each other, it must require a great share of credulity to believe that such a record rests on anything short of Divine authority.

It is not my intention to enter into an examination of the Prophecies in general, and of the events which, in the course of that *Providence* which governs the universe, have been brought about to fulfil each of them in particular. Such a work would go beyond the bounds I have prescribed to myself, and is the less necessary, as many of the Old Testament Prophecies have been already the subject of copious and able comments. I may here observe, however, that the coming of the Messiah, his manner of life, his mighty works, his death, and his resurrection, were accomplished, so exactly agreeable to what had been foretold by the Prophets of God, that many of the Jewish nation professed their faith in him as God's anointed, and thus confirmed the truth of the Prophecies. The rejection of the Saviour by the rest of that nation, the desolation that afterwards came upon them, and their consequent dispersion over the world, so far from being arguments against the truth of the Christian religion, are proofs of the

PAGE.

-	14-5
-	25
-	27
-	45-6
-	51
-	60
-	70
-	71
-	74-5
-	76
-	77
-	88
-	90
-	98
-	100
-	102
-	107-8
-	108
-	113
-	125
-	150
-	152
-	153-
-	157
-	159-60
-	167
-	181
-	186
-	188
-	189

truth of the Prophecies. That nation, by the wise providence of God, is still preserved a distinct people, as a *living evidence* for the truth—a circumstance without a parallel in history. Had it happened to the Jews as to other conquered nations, the enemies of the truth, availing themselves of the circumstance, would not have failed to assert that the prophetic books of the Old Testament were written subsequently to the events they predicted. Nay, such is the obstinate perverseness of some men, that they have actually made this assertion, as if it could be credited by any person in his right mind, that the Jews, who have ever hated the Christians, could have been brought to agree with these very Christians in fabricating books which condemn themselves. Yet those, who can believe such an inconsistency, affect to wonder at the credulity of others!

The Jews have been thus preserved distinct from the nations among which they were scattered, as guardians of the Scriptures, and witnesses of their truth. I do not mean to affirm that they have not in any case altered them, for the contrary is the fact; but I have no hesitation in asserting that the present state of the Hebrew text furnishes abundant evidence that these alterations were not effected in consequence of any deliberate design to corrupt them. They have arisen chiefly from the carelessness of transcribers, and partly from the too hasty adoption of emendations, intended to restore the purity of the text, in places where it was judged faulty from the former cause. In short, though the Jews cannot be acquitted of having been, though unintentionally, accessory in corrupting some passages, they may be allowed the credit of having been jealous (viewing them as a body not without some unprincipled members) to maintain the purity of the Scriptures, and their jealousy has been of much service in preventing some of the Doctors of the Christian Church from effecting the mischief which might otherwise have been expected from their zealous labours to make the Scriptures of the Old Testament speak a language consonant to their wishes.

Not only the first coming of the Messiah, but events that were to happen subsequently, and to follow each other in a specified order, down to the end of the world, when He shall come the second time, were foretold by the prophets of the Old Testament. The volume of prophecy was enlarged by Christ and his Apostles; and the regular accomplishment of these predictions leaves those men without excuse, who deny the miracles wrought by Jesus Christ. For those who say, "Shew us miracles and we will be convinced," might, if they were

not
fall
hear
issue
all th
ages
In
myse
collat
Chris
by his
God,
saw, v
things
therefo
unintel
it, by th
is it fro
search
that rea
But,
method
followed
standing
Spirit sa
Such
however
inclined
events as
against h
the practi
collecting
same thin
that, even
but, when
and many
truth. Th
doctrines a
how very a
able usurpa

not blind, see a wonderful miracle of daily occurrence—the rise and fall of empires, accompanied with circumstances “which make men’s hearts fail them for fear,” set political sagacity at defiance, and, in their issue, prove the wisdom of the world to be only folly—they might see all these happening exactly as foretold in the Scriptures of truth many ages before, and at the precise time appointed for their completion.

In the strictures which I am about to offer, I mean to confine myself chiefly to the Apocalypse, and to those Prophecies which collaterally embrace the same events. “The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, and which he sent and signified by his angel unto his servant John, who bare record of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things that he saw, was given for the express purpose of shewing unto his servant things that were shortly to come to pass.” Rev. i. 1. We may therefore be assured that this book, instead of being mysteriously unintelligible, as some men assert, and as others have tended to make it, by their explanations, is sufficiently plain to be understood. So far is it from presumptuous, that it is the duty of the servants of God to search into the divine purposes which it unfolds; and blessed is he that readeth and they that hear the words of this prophecy.

But, in applying the historical events which fulfil prophecy, the method which has been most commonly practised must not be followed by those who would attain, in any measure, a true understanding of the book, and who are really desirous to hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

Such is the natural obstinacy and pride of the heart of man, that, however strong the evidence may be to the contrary, he is ever inclined to give any interpretation of Scripture, and to apply any events as the fulfilment of prophecy, excepting such as militate against *his own* opinions or those of his *sect*. To this must be ascribed the practice that has generally been followed by commentators, of collecting facts from history, and then forcing the book to speak the same things. Indeed, many of the events in history are so applicable, that, even in this loose way, it is scarcely possible to miss them all; but, when this method is followed, many facts must be overlooked, and many more be misapplied, even by those who are in search of the truth. The Church of Rome is so palpably anti-Christian in its doctrines and practice, that persons of every other communion, seeing how very applicable many parts of the prophecies are to her abominable usurpations, excluding themselves from the censure, load her with

every kind of odium ; and generally, instead of examining how far the same character may belong to their own church, content themselves with declaiming against her idolatry, superstition, and tyranny—few men ever thinking it at all necessary to examine “the conversation received by tradition from their fathers.” The Church of Rome, it is true, is the mother of harlots, but she is such as a church ; therefore the harlots, her daughters, are churches. Since then, there are many daughters of Babylon ; to determine who they are, is a question of the utmost importance, and deserves the most serious investigation of every inquirer after truth ; for, whatever other qualifications a man may possess, if he be afraid to investigate this question, he never can arrive at a right knowledge of the meaning of the prophecies.

Thus far of the Introduction by *Biblicus* ; but, before proceeding with his observations on the *Sealed Book* (Rev. chap. v.) with which he commences, the contents of the preceding chapters demand particular attention. The following thoughts may perhaps serve to awaken others in the mind of the reader.

REVELATION.

CHAP. I.

THE title of the book, *The Revelation of Jesus Christ, &c.*, occupying the first three verses, has been already noticed, and the purpose for which this Revelation was given ; but the manner in which it was shown to John, to be by him communicated to his fellow-servants, is particularly expressed, and should also be attended to—it was signified, *i.e.*, displayed by signs. It is only by carefully considering these signs, and comparing them with the signs, types, and figures made use of by the prophets (to whose word we are exhorted to take heed, as ~~we would do~~ unto a light shining before us in a dark place), that we can be blessed, as were the faithful in Israel, while they meditated on the wonders of that law which was the bringer in of a better hope ; and, like them, understanding the loving kindness of the Lord, be led to look for the incorruptible inheritance.

Ver. 4—8. John addresses himself to the seven churches which were then in Asia, because it was to them he was commanded to send the account of what had been shown him ; and not, as some say, because he constituted bishops over them, and acted as their metro-

politan, such an office as metropolitan being then unknown among the churches of Christ. The book is addressed to them, as the servants of Jesus Christ, professing to walk in obedience to him, their only Lord and Head, and to them as representing his servants in the various appearances they would make during the accomplishment of the great things here revealed. Like the other Apostles, in addressing the congregation of Christ's servants, he wishes them Grace and Peace, and that from the Divine Majesty, under characters most applicable to the disclosures to be made to them. Their attention was to be drawn to many changes and overturnings in the kingdoms of this world, but these would only accomplish the purposes of Him who is, and who was, and who is to come, the unchangeable God. Amidst these, they would much need the comforts of the Holy Ghost, and this "Grace and Peace is from the Seven Spirits which are before the throne." (See chap. iv. 5, and Zech. iii. 8, 9, iv. 2, &c.) And, should they be called to witness for the truth unto persecution and death, before the kings of the earth, the grace of Jesus Christ, who witnessed a good confession before Pontius Pilate—the peace he purchased by the blood of his cross—his resurrection from the dead, as the first fruits of them that sleep—his ascension to the right hand of the Majesty in heaven, and the hope of his appearing as King of kings and Lord of lords, would be all sufficient to support their minds. With all this, as it were, full in view, and considering himself one with those he is addressing, John breaks out with this ascription of praise: "Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen." To this is added, "Behold, he cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see him, and they also who pierced him, and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, amen." Which is confirmed by a declaration of the divine character: "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty."

At the 9th verse, John begins his account of the Revelation made to him, thus: "I John, even your brother and partner in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was in the isle called Patmos, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ." He assumes no superiority over those to whom he writes, but styles himself their brother and partner in tribulation; and it was on account of his witnessing for the truth that he was banished to

the desolate isle of Patmos. But there, says he, "I was ravished in spirit, (or, in a trance, as Peter and Paul were, Acts x. 10, xxii. 17,) on the Lord's day," the first day of the week, so called from the Lord's resurrection and ascension to glory on that day, "and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet, saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last." Thus was John's attention drawn to the voice of Him who is one with Jehovah, to describe the greatness of which he compares it to the sound of a trumpet, instructing that it was the voice of the Son of Man, which all that in their graves shall hear, when he shall send his angels with a trumpet and a great voice, Matt. xxiv. 31; 1 Cor. xv. 52; 1 Thess. iv. 16. It was from this same voice, speaking from the burning bush (Exod. iii.), that Moses received his commission for the deliverance of God's chosen people from their typical bondage in ancient Egypt; and when he proposed the question which would be asked regarding his authority, God said unto him, "I am that I am: and thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I am hath sent me unto you." In this very character God also addresses his people, by the mouth of the prophet Isaiah, when reasoning against their infidelity regarding his power to deliver them from their captivity in Babylon, Isa. xli. 4. "I, Jehovah, the first, and with the last, I am the same," xlv. 6. "Thus saith the Lord, the King of Israel, and his Redeemer, the Lord of Hosts, I am the first, and I am the last, and beside me there is no God," xlviii. 12. "Hear me, O Jacob, and Israel my called, I am, I am the first, and I am the last." These declarations of the Divine character to Israel, in Egypt and in Babylon, are wonderful when compared with this to John, while through him all the servants of God were to be instructed as to their complete deliverance from all their enemies; for it was said to him, "What thou seest write in a book, and send it to the seven churches which are in Asia; unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamos, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea."

"And I turned to see the voice that spake with me (says John); and being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks; the likeness of the Son of Man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle. His head and his hairs were white like wool, as white as snow; and his eyes were as a flame of fire; and his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and his voice as the sound of many waters. And he had in his right hand seven stars; and out of his mouth went a sharp two-edged sword;

and his countenance was as the sun shineth in its strength." Were there any doubt of all that the other inspired writers have said of the Man of God's right hand—the Son over his own house—the Great High Priest, passed into the heavens—possessing all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, and having all the fulness of the Godhead dwelling in him bodily—the account which John here gives of what he saw, is sufficient to remove it. His head being white like wool, proves his eternity, and how worthy he is of reverence; his eyes like a flame of fire, that he searches the heart and tries the reins; his feet as fine brass, marks him just and upright in his goings in the sanctuary, and among the nations; his voice as the sound of many waters (of a great multitude), denotes what was to be accomplished by his voice, spoken of in Psalms xxix. and xciii. The stars (which, with the candlesticks, are explained in verse 20) being in his right hand, imports not only their employment, but their safety, for God is said to save and uphold by his right hand, Psa. xvii. 7, lxiii. 8. This right hand was laid upon John, ver. 17. The sharp two-edged sword going out of his mouth, corresponds with the other parts of this description. (See Heb. iv. 12, Psa. cxlix. 6—9, and Rev. xix. 15.) His countenance as the sun shineth in its strength, confirms what John had before been a witness of, Matt. xvii. 2, as well as what Paul experienced, when he fell blind to the earth, Acts ix. 3, and afterwards bore testimony of, xxii. 6, and xxvi. 13, in which last passage the light from heaven is said to have been "above the brightness of the sun at mid-day."

In the 17th verse, John informs us what effect the manifestation of all this glory had upon him: "And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead." This effect was no way singular upon John: it was the same Glorious One from whom our first parents wished to hide themselves, Gen. iii. 8; before whom Moses hid his face, Exod. iii. 6; before whom Joshua fell on his face to the earth, Josh. v. 14; at whose appearance Gideon cried, "Alas, my Lord God!" Judg. vi. 22; and on whose account Manoah said unto his wife, "We shall surely die, because we have seen God," xiii. 22. Isaiah was affected in the like manner, Isa. vi. 5, and Daniel who had a vision similar to that of John, which he describes, chap. x. 5, 6, gives a like account of the effect of it upon him, 7, 8, 9. The transfiguration, and the glory which shone upon Paul, before referred to, produced the like abasement; and this is indeed the constant effect of the Gospel on sinful man; for wherever the Apostle's commendation of the truth comes

to the conscience, displaying the light of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, it kills, by pulling down every stronghold and towering imagination trusted to for life: nor is there any thing can give life, but that which is conveyed in the comfort administered to John. "And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, fear not, I am the first and the last, the Living One who became dead: and, behold, I am alive for evermore, amen; and have the keys of the separate state, and of death." These keys, in the possession of the Prince of Life, may be considered as proofs of his victory over death; and, as emblems of trust, they are significant of his being the Lord both of the dead and living. "O Death! where is thy sting? O Grave! where is thy victory?"

John is now again commanded to write, verse 19, and this command refers, 1. To the things which he had seen—an important part of what was to be shown to the servants of Jesus Christ; 2. To the things which are—the then state of the seven churches in Asia, as pointed out in the Epistles to them: which Epistles it will be shown have also a respect, 3. To the things which shall be hereafter, more fully revealed from chap. iv. 1, &c. To this command is subjoined an explanation of the stars and the candlesticks, which may be considered as an introduction to the Epistles: "The mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks, is this, the seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven candlesticks, which thou sawest, are the seven churches." Blessed are those churches which are supplied with oil from the two olive trees on their right side and on their left; they will shine as lights in the world, holding forth the word of life, and their good works will be manifest.

CHAP. II. III.

THESE chapters contain the Epistles to the seven churches in Asia. That there were such churches as these Epistles are addressed to, at the time John wrote, is not questioned by any who credit Him who directed the writer. He saw among them things needing reproof, and he reproved and admonished them; but they neglected or forgot his words, and his threatenings have been literally executed against them, as might be proved by many witnesses who have visited Asia. This ought to enforce the subject of these Epistles on all who read them;

for
we
vie
Ind
the
wri
an e
ther
that
This
histo
"sev
so cl
divid
spoke
ward
Th
third
Christ
under
design
promis
of tha
hope o
it wou
encour
the mar
that ha
those to
individu
Spirit sa
1. Th
seven sp
golden c
they had
same ch
their lab
evil, and
deeds of
it may be

for they were not written merely for the sake of those to whom they were first addressed; but, as many think, to exhibit a prophetic view of the church of Christ, from that time till his second coming. Indeed, if these Epistles have no farther meaning than what related to the churches in Asia, they are like no other portion of the prophetic writings; but the call, at the conclusion of all of them, "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches"—were there no other evidence, is sufficient to prove their farther design; and that, what was addressed to one, was for the instruction of many. This view of these seven Epistles, as containing a complete prophetic history, accords with, and is confirmed by, the use of the number "seven," in the after parts of this prophecy; and, although it is not so clear that the portion of time to which this history refers should be divided into seven distinct periods, as some suppose, yet the things spoken of in these Epistles evidently correspond with what is afterwards more fully unfolded.

The designation "angel of the church," is taken notice of under the *third* trumpet, where the *constitution* and *order* of the primitive Christian Church is minutely considered. The different characters under which Jesus Christ addresses himself to the churches, seem designed as applicable to their different states, as do also the various promises made to them; which call the attention to many of the folds of that wisdom by which God from the beginning encouraged the hope of the things he hath laid up for those that love him; but which it would swell these pages too much to notice particularly. The encouragement they afford is glorious indeed, yet it would seem, from the manner in which both the call and the promise are worded—"He that hath an ear," and "To him that overcometh"—that many of those to whom the Epistles were addressed would not hear, while individuals, in distant corners and ages, might yield an ear to what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

1. The church of Ephesus is addressed by "Him who holdeth the seven spirits in his right hand, and walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks." From what he says to this church, it is evident they had begun to experience what Paul had warned the elders of this same church of, Acts xx. 29; but it is recorded to their honour, with their labour and patience, that they could not bear them who were evil, and had discovered the deceitful workers. They also hated the deeds of the Nicolaitans (an inter-community of women), from which it may be understood that they attended to the exhortations in Paul's

Epistle to them, Eph. v. 3—12. Nevertheless, he witnesses against them, because they had left their first love. This is the beginning, the source of all corruption in the churches of Christ. They forget his love to them, neglect his commandments, and yield obedience to others. But he exhorts them to remember from whence they were fallen, and repent and do the first works; at the same time threatening them with speedy judgment if they did not repent.

2. The church in Smyrna, by "the First and the Last, who was dead and is alive," according with the rest of the Epistle, which is altogether consolatory. Those for whom it was designed were in tribulation and poverty; yet he says they are rich (in faith): they were troubled with false teachers, and they were still farther to suffer by prisoning and death. But they had been taught that, if they suffered, they should also reign; and, to encourage them in this hope, the Prince of Life says, "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life. He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death."

3. The church in Pergamos, by "Him who hath the sharp sword with two edges;" and, after acknowledging their steadfastness in the faith, even where Satan had established his dwelling, and while some had suffered death for witnessing to the truth, he charges them with retaining among them some who followed the course of Balaam, that lover of the wages of unrighteousness, who, although led to pronounce as a blessing, "The people shall dwell alone, and shall not be reckoned among the nations," yet taught Balak, king of Moab, to cast a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to mix them with his people, and so lead them to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication. This is connected with their allowing the hateful doctrine of the Nicolaitans to be held among them. But he who thus lays before them their errors, exhorts them to repent; at same time threatening, if they did not repent, to come quickly and fight against them with the sword of his mouth.

4. The church in Thyatira, by "the Son of God who hath his eyes as a flame of fire, and his feet as fine brass," to whom the works, charity, service, faith, and patience, of those he reserves to himself, are all known, and who will bring to light the depths of Satan, however hidden and dark, and manifest himself as "the searcher of the hearts and trier of the reins." In the former Epistle, the corruption of the church, by joining with the kings of the earth, is plainly pointed to. Here the corruption is painted in still stronger colours; and this

witnesses against
the beginning, the
They forget his
eld obedience to
hence they were
time threatening

Last, who was
pistle, which is
signed were in
(in faith): they
farther to suffer
if they suffered,
hope, the Prince
will give thee a
t of the second

the sharp sword
dfastness in the
and while some
rges them with
f Balaam, that
d to pronounce
not be reckoned
ast a stumbling
his people, and
commit forni-
ful doctrine of
thus lays before
ne threatening,
them with the

hath his eyes
m the works,
es to himself,
f Satan, how-
archer of the
the corruption
lainly pointed
urs; and this

church is charged with suffering that woman Jezebel, who calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and seduce the servants of Jesus to commit fornication, and to join in the worship of idols. Jezebel, the daughter of Ethbaal, king of the Zidonians, was espoused by Ahab, king of Israel, who did evil in the sight of the Lord above all that were before him. He supported 450 priests of Baal, and Jezebel had 400 of the priests of the groves who ate at her table. She obtained the vineyard of Naboth for Ahab, who coveted it, by causing Naboth to be killed, under authority of letters as from the king. Elijah the prophet was obliged to flee from the vengeance of this woman, 1 Kings xvi., xviii., &c. The parallel to this occupies much of this book of Revelation; and, as vengeance was executed on Jezebel of old, still more signal vengeance awaits the mother of harlots; for her children shall be killed with death; yea, happy shall he be that shall take her little ones, and dash them against the rock. But those who had not known the depths of Satan, who had not yielded to the much fair speech of the false woman, nor declined to her ways, and who were suffering under the "wicked one in great power," are encouraged with the promise of being made rulers over their enemies, and breaking in pieces their oppressors.

5. The church in Sardis, by "Him who hath the seven spirits of God and the seven stars," who blames them as having a name to live, while they were dead; and exhorts them to be vigilant, and strengthen the things which remained, but were ready to die; for their works were not perfect before God. Yet he acknowledges a few who had not defiled their garments, by joining in the worship of the Beast or his Image, and promises that they should be arrayed in white, their names retained in the book of life, and confessed by him before his Father. This Epistle is supposed to refer to those who, in some measure, adhered to the Scriptures, in their faith and practice, during those ages of darkness when the anti-Christian power was at its height. Such were the Waldenses, whose bold opposition to the Papal corruptions served to inspire and encourage others, in different quarters, and the labours of these, in opening up the Scriptures, led to the Reformation.

6. The church in Philadelphia. "He that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth and no man shutteth, and shutteth and no man openeth," sets before them an open door. That power which sat in the temple of God, as God, assuming authority to open and shut heaven at its own pleasure, was now to be

circumscribed, disregarded, hated, and consumed; while the authority of Christ, the King of Zion, the Son over his own house, which had long been despised and kept from the sight of men, was to be proclaimed for the comfort of his suffering people. This was accomplished by the translating and publishing of the Scriptures, God's witnesses, to the nations, which set before his captives an open door. Though those who should adhere to the word of Christ's patience were to have but little strength, they are exhorted to hold fast by that word, that no man take their crown; and they are encouraged with the promise of being made pillars in the temple of God, &c.

7. The church of the Laodiceans, by "The Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God, who charges them with being neither cold nor hot, but lukewarm; thinking themselves rich and increased with goods, and needing nothing, while he testifies they are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked. It is evident that the state of the church, pointed out in this Epistle, answers to the appearance of the kingdom of heaven described in Matt. xxv. 1—12, and other passages, which speak of the time when the Son of Man shall come, speedily to avenge his elect. At the time of his appearance in the form of a servant, the Jews trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others; and they were blind to his work and to the signs of the times;—such is to be the state of professing Christians, while he stands at the door and knocks, by bringing to pass the things of which he had told us before.

CHAP. IV.

THIS chapter commences an account of other visions. After the things John had seen and heard, chap. i. ii, iii., he looked, and beheld a door opened in heaven, and the same voice which spake to him before, chap. i. 10, called to him, "Come up hither, and I will show thee the things which must be hereafter." Upon this he was instantly transported in spirit; and so proceeds to describe what he saw in heaven. His description corresponds so much with the account of the church of Israel encamped in the wilderness, Num. i., ii., xxiii., 21, 22, xxiv. 2, &c., that it not only affords a confirmation that the tabernacle and all the service thereof were patterns of heavenly things, but also that the church of Israel, encamped according to the direction of God, was a pattern of the general assembly and

chu
his
simi
wer
wer
and-
of th
right
formi
unto
lightn
the D
before
to the
most
said o
the an
which
"befo
laver o
midst o
creatur
"in th
Newton
and on
of the
three tr
Levites,
or ensig
ponds w
creature
Issachar
living cr
Ephraim
third livi
between
creature
and Naph
creatdres
of eyes w

church of the first-born. In ver. 2, 3, God is represented sitting on his throne, as in the tabernacle or temple, and the description is similar to that given by Ezekiel, i. 26—28. The priests and Levites were stationed next the tabernacle; "and round about the throne were four-and-twenty seats (*Gr.* thrones); and upon the thrones four-and-twenty elders sitting," answering to the four-and-twenty courses of the Jewish priests; "clothed in white raiment," the emblem of righteousness; "and they had on their heads crowns of gold," conforming to their thrones, and showing that they are kings and priests unto God, chap. v. 10, &c. "And out of the throne proceeded lightnings, and thunders, and voices," the usual accompaniments of the Divine presence. "And there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God," corresponding to the golden candlestick with seven lamps, which was before the most holy place in the tabernacle, and, when compared with what is said of the eyes of the Lamb, chap. v. 6, agreeing with the words of the angel to Zechariah, iv. 10, "Those seven are the eyes of the Lord, which run to and fro through the whole earth." There was also "before the throne a sea of glass like unto crystal," answering to the laver or the molten sea in the temple of Solomon. "And in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne, were four living creatures (*not* beasts) full of eyes before and behind." For the words "in the midst of," several old versions read "under;" but Bp. Newton interprets the sentence thus, "before and behind the throne, and on each side of the throne;" which agrees with the encampment of the church in the wilderness. The form was an exact square: three tribes on each side, with the tabernacle, surrounded by the Levites, in the midst; and the middle tribe on each side had a banner or ensign, which Jewish writers describe in a manner that corresponds with John's account of the living creatures. "The first living creature was like a lion," and this was the ensign of Judah between Issachar and Zabulon, on the east side of the tabernacle; "the second living creature was like a calf or ox," and this was the ensign of Ephraim, between Manasseh and Benjamin, on the west side; the third living creature had a face like a man," the ensign of Reuben, between Simeon and Gad, on the south side; "the fourth living creature was like a flying eagle," the ensign of Dan, between Ashur and Naphthali, on the north side. It is farther said, "the four living creatures had each of them six wings about him, and they were full of eyes within;" which would seem to point them out as guardians

and leaders of the tribes; and John hears them calling attention to the signs at the opening of the first four seals, chap. vi. The idea indulged in by some learned men, of these living creatures being emblems of the Trinity conjoined with the manhood of Jesus Christ, seems irreconcilable with their worship, in connexion with the church recorded here and in the following chapter.

CHAP. V.

OF THE SEALED BOOK.

"AND I saw, in the right hand of him that sat on the throne, a book written within and on the back side, sealed with seven seals: and I saw a strong angel, proclaiming with a loud voice, Who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof? And no man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon: and I wept much because no man was found worthy to open and to read the book, neither to look thereon: and one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not, behold the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof. And I beheld, and lo, in the midst of the throne, and of the four living creatures, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb, as it had been slain, having seven horns, and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God, sent forth into all the earth; and he came and took the book out of the right hand of him that sat on the throne," ver. 1—7.

Here mention is made of a book, which "no one, no creature (as the word in the original imports), in heaven, nor in earth, nor under the earth, was able to open." "The Lion of the tribe of Judah," "The Root of David,"* was alone found worthy to open the book.

* These characters, under which Jesus Christ hath prevailed to open the book, may give some idea of its import. "The Lion of the tribe of Judah" doubtless refers to Jacob's prophecy, Gen. xlix. 8, 9; "Judah, thou art he whom thy brethren shall praise:"—"Thou art worthy to take the book, for thou wast slain," &c.) "Thy hand shall be in the neck of thine enemies; thy father's children shall bow down before thee. Judah is a lion's whelp: from the prey, my son, thou art gone up: he stooped down, he couched as a lion, and as an old lion; who shall rouse him up?" But, in connexion with this prophecy, it has also a reference to the ensign of the tribe of Judah, which marched in front of the hosts of Israel, of whom Balaam said, Num. xxiii. 24, "Behold the people shall rise up as a great lion, and lift up himself as a young lion: he shall not lie down till he eat of the prey, and drink the blood of the slain." He by whose power these words received

ing attention to the
The idea indulged
ng emblems of the
st, seems irrecon-
church recorded

throne, a book
ven seals: and I
Who is worthy to
o man in heaven,
open the book,
man was found
ok thereon: and
the Lion of the
en the book, and
lo, in the midst
the midst of the
even horns, and
forth into all the
ht hand of him

no creature (as
earth, nor under
ibe of Judah,"
open the book.

to open the book,
Judah" doubtless
hom thy brethren
wast slain," &c.)
children shall bow
on, thou art gone
who shall rouse
reference to the
osts of Israel, of
rise up as a great
till he eat of the
e words received

If we attend carefully to the description which John gives of this book, (says *Biblicus*), we shall be at no loss, from its marks and characters, to ascertain what is the one intended.

1. The book was "written within and on the back-side." Its being written on the back side, or outside, evidently imports that a part of the writing was visible—that is, the book was already in the possession of the church, and partly intelligible; and if we attend to what passed when "the Lamb who was slain, but is now alive," took the book into his hand to open it, we shall discover a part of the writing itself, for it became the subject of the song of those around the throne, "Thou hast made us unto our God kings and priests, and we shall reign upon the earth." However dark the other parts of the book were, this was one thing which could be plainly read in it, "that a time was coming in which the saints shall possess the kingdom, Dan. vii. 22; when the rule and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom," ver. 27. Thus it appears that the book from which they took their song was that of the prophet Daniel.

2. It was a "sealed book." Here we have a very particular and explicit description, by which the book is ascertained to be that of Daniel, beyond all possibility of cavil. Daniel was commanded to "shut up the words, and seal the book of his visions." He alone, of all the prophets of God, received such a command; and, of all the books in the hands of the church, his is the only one which we find so shut up and sealed.

3. The book was not only sealed, but "sealed with seven seals." It could by no means be opened till one qualified to give the interpretation should open and explain it. The seals being *seven* in number, show how perfectly the meaning was hid; *seven* in Scripture language

their first fulfilment,—even He who subdued nations before his people, and made them rule over kings; who gave them as dust to their sword, and as driven stubble to their bow, till they got possession of the promised land;—He only could open this book, which reveals the full design of all the wars of Israel,—that his purchased people should be brought in, and planted in the inheritance, the place prepared of Jehovah to dwell in, the sanctuary which his hands have established,—where he shall reign for ever and ever.

"The Root of David" refers to Isaiah xi., and when the description given of him and of his work, in that chapter, is considered, we must say Infinite Wisdom only could have thus directed the attention to such a character, as able to open this book! After the restitution of all things, with the complete bliss of man in the presence of God and the Lamb, is displayed to John, Jesus says, Rev. xxii. 16, "I am the root and the offspring of David;" as if to intimate that this prophecy will then only be fully accomplished.

denoting what is complete and perfect. But we are not, in the present instance, left to take such a general signification of the term *seven*. As Daniel's was the only sealed book in the hands of the church, so we find that character given to it in no less than four places of that prophet, viz., viii. 26, ix. 24, xii. 4 and 9; and it is not a little remarkable that the number of times which "the vision"—"the prophecy"—"the words"—"the book," are "shut, closed up," or "sealed," in those places, amounts exactly to *seven*, as follows:—

1. "Shut thou up the vision," viii. 26. 2. "Seventy weeks are determined . . . to seal up the vision"— 3. "Seventy weeks are determined . . . to seal up . . . the prophecy," ix. 24. 4. "Shut up the words"— 5. "and seal the book . . . to the time of the end," xiii. 4. 6. "The words are closed up"— 7. "and sealed, till the time of the end," xii. 9.

4. The book was complete; both the inside and outside of the roll or book was "covered with writing" (so the expression in the original denotes); that is, there was no room left for additions. And, if proper attention be paid to the explanation of this book given by "the Lion of the tribe of Judah," it will be seen that it contained a prophecy of the purposes of God, respecting his church and the reign of the Messiah, so complete and perfect, that nothing could be added to it. The removal of the seals from the book of Daniel was all that was wanted to put the church in possession of this knowledge.

5. We learn from Daniel himself how long the book was to remain sealed. This sealing or shutting up was to continue for certain weeks (of years); that is, as we find by the context, chap. ix., till the time of "Messiah the Prince"—till he should "make an end of sin," (*sin offerings*, for so the word signifies,) by the one offering of himself; or, in other words, till an end should be put to the sacrifices of the law; and we find the same thing intimated twice afterwards, in ch. xii., by the expression "the time of the end;" that is, the time of Christ, whose coming put an end to the Mosaic institutions. The book, then, that was opened in the Apocalypse, had its seals loosed at a period answerable to the prediction respecting the time when Daniel's prophecies were to be opened; and, the fulfilment answering to the prediction, the evidence becomes complete, that the prophecy of Daniel was the book that was opened.

The inference from all this is obvious. Since "Messiah the Prince" has come, according to all the prophecies that had been given out concerning him, and has removed the seals from the book of Daniel,

it is
they
of J
writ
B
end
genic
Mess
poss
shoul
wond
ing in
Jerusa
high p
pollute
the tra
under
sanctu
think i
those w
day? I
tions g
taberna
those w
Of li
follow
changed
Heb. vi
nant ha
Presenc
alone on
for the e
into the
tabernacl
present, I
Christ.
time of th
ad no lo
the Lord,
in those

re not, in the pre-
n of the term *seven*.
of the church, so
our places of that
it is not a little
sion"—"the pro-
closed up," or
n, as follows:—
ty weeks are de-
venty weeks are
ix. 24. 4. "Shut
o the time of the
7. "and sealed,

outside of the roll
on in the original
s. And, if pro-
k given by "the
ained a prophecy
the reign of the
l be added to it.
was all that was
edge.

k was to remain
or certain weeks
ix., till the time
nd of ain," (*sin*
ring of himself;
sacrifices of the
ards, in ch. xii.,
time of Christ,
s. The book,
als loosed at a
when Daniel's
swering to the
e prophecy of

ah the Prince"
een given out
book of Daniel,

it is now, Rev. x. 2, *an open book*. "Blessed is he that readeth, and they that give credit to the words of this prophecy—the Revelation of Jesus Christ (explaining the prophet Daniel), and keep the things written therein, for the time is at hand."

But, if the book of Daniel was to continue sealed till the time of the end of the Jewish dispensation,—if no human powers, however ingeniously exerted, could open or explain the sealed parts till the Messiah should give the true meaning of them,—how should it be possible that, by following Jewish interpretations, the Christian church should ever attain a right understanding of their import? Need we wonder, then, that Commentators should miss their aim, when treading in the steps of the Jewish Doctors, they continue to consider Jerusalem as the holy city—the temple as the sanctuary—the Jewish high priest as the Prince of the Host—Antiochus Epiphanes as "the polluter of the sanctuary, the taker away of the daily, the author of the transgression of desolation," Dan. xi. 31—and the Roman armies under Titus, as those intended by the destroyers of the city and the sanctuary. Ought we not rather to be surprised that they should ever think it possible that light should be expected on this subject from those who have "eyes, but see not, and ears, but hear not, unto this day? Rom. xi. 8, or that they could overlook the numerous intimations given in the Scriptures respecting the substitution of another tabernacle, another sanctuary or holy place, another holy city, for those which existed under the Jewish dispensation.

Of little avail will it be to admit these truths generally, if we do not follow them to all their consequences. "The priesthood being changed, there is made, of necessity, a change also of the law," Heb. vii. 12, and of every thing connected with it. The first covenant had a worldly sanctuary, and in this the place of the Divine Presence, called "the holiest of all," into which the high priest entered alone once a year, not without blood, which he offered for himself and for the errors of the people: the Holy Spirit signifying that the way into the true holiest of all was not made manifest, while the first tabernacle was standing, which was only a figure for the time then present, Heb. ix. 1, 3, 7, &c., until the time of the reformation by Christ. Now, if the Mosaic institutions were to continue only till the time of the reformation by Christ, and if Jerusalem, the temple, &c., had no longer any peculiar holiness, after they were left desolate by the Lord, and the veil of the temple was rent in twain, is it not absurd in those who call themselves Christians, to continue, with blind

Jewish predilection, to apply to that Jerusalem, "which is in bondage with her children," Gal. iv. 25, events which were to happen subsequently to the coming of Him to whom Moses and all the prophets bore witness, as the end of the law? Have we not a High Priest, who is set on the right hand of the Majesty in the heavens; a minister of the sanctuary and of the "true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched and not man?" Heb. viii. 1, 2. Hath not Christ come, a High Priest of good things, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle than the one made with hands? He hath not entered into the holy places made with hands, the figures of the true, but into heaven itself, Heb. ix. 11, 24. Instead of the Jerusalem which is in bondage, have we not the Jerusalem which is above, and free? Gal. iv. 26. In one word, has not the time come, in which the true worshippers worship the Father in the spirit and truth of all the figurative institutions of Moses, John iv. 23, being free from all bondage to the former weak, beggarly, worldly elements or rudiments? Gal. iv. 3, 9.

From these few observations, it is evident that things spoken of the city, the sanctuary, the sacrifice, the oblation, &c., and referring to periods subsequent to the anointing of the Most Holy, Dan. ix. 24, have no relation to the city which was formerly called holy, or to the worldly sanctuary and ritual of Moses; they are mere adaptations of old terms to the time of the New Testament dispensation.

As to the term, "Prince of the Host," it never was applied in the Scriptures, nor any similar term, to the Jewish high priest; and, to make such an application of it, is not only arbitrary, but contrary to the express plan and tenor of both the Old Dispensation and the New. This is a point of some moment, but it will not require many words to set it in a clear light. Both of them were to have a high priest, and (not to insist here on other characteristic differences) there was to be this distinguishing circumstance between the two,—the priests under the Law could only be of the tribe of Levi, and could have none of the prerogatives of royalty, which belonged to another tribe, that of Judah. The New Dispensation, on the contrary, has a Regal High Priest—"a High Priest after the order of Melchizedec," Heb. vii., who was King of Salem, and also Priest of the Most High God:—The Christian church has a Great High Priest, who is passed into the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, Heb. iv. 13, whom God hath made both Lord (Ruler, King, Prince,) and Christ, Acts ii. 36, agreeably to what had been before prophesied of him—"I have anointed my King upon Zion, the hill of my holiness." He is "the Prince of the

How
Rev
his
host
sition
king
beas
Epip
cast
can t
temp
by th
this s
As
days
writin
are ad
that w
them t
subjec
by insp
If we v
even if
to respo
that the
tended
ample i
Instead
the book
prevent
explanat
true wit
removed
to contin

which is in bondage
 e to happen subse-
 and all the prophets
 not a High Priest,
 eavens; a minister
 h the Lord pitched
 tutions of Moses,
 come, a High Priest
 nacle than the one
 holy places made
 elf, Heb. ix. 11, 24.
 have we not the
 In one word, has
 worship the Father
 tutions of Moses,
 er weak, beggarly,

ings spoken of the
 c., and referring to
 Holy, Dan. ix. 24,
 ed holy, or to the
 ere adaptations of
 sation.

as applied in the
 h priest; and, to
 y, but contrary to
 ion and the New.
 quire many words
 a high priest, and
) there was to be
 the priests under
 ould have none of
 er tribe, that of
 as a Regal High
 edec," Heb. vii.,
 High God:—The
 passed into the
 a God hath made
 36, agreeably to
 nointed my King
 e Prince of the

Host:—John styles him "the Prince of the Kings of the earth," Rev. i. 5, and it is the name which he carries on his vesture and on his thigh, "King of kings and Lord of lords," ch. xix. 16—for "the host" in Daniel, as will be proved in the course of the present disquisition, means "the kings of the earth," and particularly those of the kingdoms of Europe, the body or proper territory of Daniel's fourth beast. But, if Christ be the "Prince of the host," Antiochus Epiphanes can by no possibility be he who made himself his equal, cast down his sanctuary, and took away the daily, Dan. viii. 11, nor can the sanctuary and daily alluded to, be the daily sacrifice and the temple at Jerusalem; and the whole of the fabric that has been reared by the numerous Commentators and Expositors who have gone upon this system, must fall to the ground. But to return,

As the book of Daniel is the sealed book that was opened in the days of John, it follows that the same relation subsists between the writings of these two prophets, as between a lock and its key. They are adapted to each other; and, if we would understand the "words that were closed up and sealed till the time of the end," we must use them together, attending likewise to what has been written upon the same subject by the other Prophets and Apostles—"for all Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for instruction," 2 Tim. iii. 16. If we wish to profit by them, we must take the result which they offer, even if it should reprove and censure what we may have been taught to respect and venerate. If we hearken to the reproof, we shall find that the same Scriptures also point out what is necessary to be attended to for correction of these things which they condemn, and give ample instruction in everything that regards our faith and practice. Instead of following the Jewish and anti-Christian interpretations of the book of Daniel, which have been the principal causes that have prevented him from being understood, let us carefully attend to the explanation that has been given of this Prophet, "by the faithful and true witness," as recorded in the Apocalypse; in which the seals are removed from that book;—the time, for the vision and the prophecy to continue sealed, having expired.

THE FIRST SEAL.

"WHEN the Lamb had opened one of the seals (says John), I saw, and behold a white horse; and he that sat on him had a bow; and a crown was given unto him: and he went forth conquering and to conquer," Rev. vi. 1, 2.

That a "crowned warrior" is here spoken of—a mighty king, who overcomes all his enemies—is obvious; nor will there be much difficulty in determining which of the personages mentioned in the sealed book (Daniel) is alluded to, if we keep in view the general scope of the prophecies which it records. The grand and leading fact proclaimed in the book referred to, is this, ii. 44, "The God of heaven shall set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people: it shall break in pieces and consume all these (other) kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever." We are told afterwards, vii. 13, 14, that this kingdom is to be given to "one like the Son of Man," and ver. 27, be possessed by "the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom," and that "all dominions shall serve and obey him." The "one like the Son of Man," here called the "Most High," being chief or highest of all the princes or rulers, mentioned in Daniel, is, according to the Hebrew method of marking the superlative, styled in another place, viii. 25, "the Prince of princes;" and, where other kings are compared to "the host of heaven," he is "the Prince of the host," viii. 10, 11, which means exactly the same as the former expression. He is God's anointed King over that kingdom which is never to be destroyed; and is therefore, ix. 25, emphatically called "the Messiah Prince," that is, the "anointed Prince." Other kings are mentioned in Daniel. None of these, however, can be the rider alluded to in this first Seal; for "their dominion is to be taken away," vii. 12; and though one of them was to have the audacity to set himself over the rest, xi. 37, yet we are told, vii. 26, "The judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end;" but to the personage here spoken of is given, not only a crown, but victory over all his enemies. He goes forth conquering and to conquer!

That such a king was to come, had been so plainly predicted in the writings of the Prophets, that it is not surprising that there should have been a general expectation of his appearance at the very time that Jesus was born. Daniel, in particular, had not only mentioned

* In the king's original for "reign," vienne,

the fact, but had pointed out the time for his coming. Accordingly, when John came proclaiming the baptism of repentance, saying, in the words of Isaiah, xl. 3, "Prepare ye the way of the Lord," the people were at no loss to understand that he spoke of this promised king: the point they wished to know was, whether he (John) was the Messiah or not, Luke iii. 15, John i. 19—25. When John was put in prison, Jesus went into Galilee, proclaiming the good tidings of the reign of God.* "The time," said he, "is accomplished; the reign of God is at hand; repent and believe the good tidings, Mark i. 14, 15. How remarkable the expression—"the good news of the reign of God!" Those who heard him, however ignorant they might be of the nature of the reign of which he spake, knew perfectly that to which he alluded—"We have found him (saith Philip to Nathanael) of whom Moses in the Law and the Prophets did write:" and Nathanael shows how he understood these words, in the address he makes soon after to Jesus: "Thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel," John i. 45, 49. Among the Samaritans, also, the same hope was entertained: "I know," said the woman with whom Jesus conversed at the well, "that the Messiah (that is, the anointed) cometh; when he is come he will teach us all things." Many others of the people of Samaria also believed when they had heard him themselves, and said unto the woman, "This is indeed the Messiah, the Saviour of the world," John iv. 25, 42. They had no doubt that this was the promised King of kings, "the Lord of Hosts, who shall reign in Mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before his ancients gloriously, Isaiah xxiv. 23; when the moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed;" that is, the host of heaven, or the rulers of the world, the opposers of his reign.

Some commentators have supposed that Vespasian, or some other Roman emperor, is alluded to as the rider on the white horse. Their reason for adopting such an opinion may be summed up in a few words. "The Revelation contains things which must shortly come to pass, chap. i. 1—things still future at the time it was communicated to John, and therefore cannot relate directly to the setting up of Christ's kingdom, an event already past." It would be a waste of time to enter into a long argument to show the absurdity of this opi-

* In our common version these words are rendered "preaching the Gospel of the kingdom of God"—a translation which is far from conveying the sense of the original. The word "kingdom" is improperly used, even in the Lord's Prayer, for "reign." It is more correctly rendered in the French translation, *ton regne vienno*, not *royaume*.—See Campbell's 5th Prelim. Dissert.

nion. In vain should we search the Sealed Book for an allusion to Vespasian, or any other of the Roman emperors: their empire is, indeed, described in it as the terrible power that was to devour the earth, tread it down, and break it in pieces; but their individual acts are never mentioned. But, not to insist on this at present, when we look forward in the first chapter, we find that John was commanded, ver. 19, to write "the things which he had seen, and the things that then were," as well as "the things that were to be hereafter." The principal subject on which he was to write, related to what he had seen with his eyes, looked upon, and handled of the Word of Life, * John i. 1,—even to the reign of the Messiah, which had then commenced, and to his ultimate victory: in spite of all the opposition he was to encounter, especially from the ten kings which were yet to arise, and the little-great king, to which they were to give their strength. Indeed, the words "he went forth conquering and to conquer" (*nicon, kai ina nicase*) are so emphatic in the original, that with no propriety whatever can they be applied to any other but Him whom all kingdoms shall serve and obey. He not only goes forth conquering in the beginning of his course, but *ina, to that end*—the event, the issue is *victory!* Among other enemies to be subdued by him, are *Death*, the rider on the pale horse, and *Hades*, his follower. These, to crown his triumph, "he casts alive into the lake of fire," Rev. xx. 14; "for he must reign till he has put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy, Death, shall be destroyed," 1 Cor. xv. 25, 26.

That the Messiah is the personage intended by this crowned conqueror, is a fact that does not rest merely on inferences, but on the direct testimony of the prophecy itself; for, when the warfare is terminated, Rev. xix. 11, 16, John again brings to our view the "white horse," and informs us, in the most sublime language, who was the rider. "He that sat on him was called Faithful and True; and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written that no man knew but he himself. He was clothed in a vesture dipped in blood; and his name is called The Word of God.* The armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean; and out of his mouth

* John tells us elsewhere, John i. 1, 14, that "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God, and the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us."

goeth a sharp sword, with which he should smite the nations; and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the wine-press of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God: and he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, "King of kings and Lord of lords."

Such is the description given in the Revelation of him, who, in Daniel, is called "The Most High," "One like the Son of Man," "The Prince of the Host," "The Prince of Princes," "Messiah the Prince;" and it agrees with what had been prophesied by David, when speaking of the things he had made touching the King, Ps. xlv. Heb. i. 8, 9, "Thou art fairer than the children of men; grace is poured into thy lips: therefore God hath blessed thee for ever. Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, O most Mighty, with thy glory and thy majesty! and in thy majesty ride prosperously, because of meekness and righteousness, and thy right hand shall teach thee terrible things. Thine arrows are sharp in the heart of the king's enemies: the people shall fall under thee. Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: the sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre. Thou lovest righteousness and hatest wickedness; therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows." "Who is this King of glory? The Lord, strong and mighty! the Lord, mighty in battle! the Lord of Hosts!—He is the King of glory!" Ps. xxiv. 8, 9. Was that despised individual, who was put to death at Jerusalem nearly eighteen hundred years ago, as a blasphemer; was he the mighty personage here mentioned? God's righteous servant, who was to be thus "exalted, extolled, and made very high!—was to be the astonishment of many!—his visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men!" Isaiah lii. 13, 14. "Despised and rejected, a man of sorrows and acquainted with griefs." Before he should "see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied"—before the time for "dividing him a portion with the great, and the spoil with the strong"—he was to "pour out his soul unto death, and be numbered with transgressors." "He died with the wicked, and was buried in the sepulchre of the rich," Isaiah liii. 3—14. The opening of the first Seal, then, brings to view this most important of all truths: That Messiah had gone forth as a mighty king "conquering and to conquer." The Jews expected that on his appearance he should assume that character; and it is not surprising that they should have done so, understanding, as they did, from many parts of the Old Testament, and particularly from Daniel, that to him

was to be given dominion and glory, and a kingdom, so extensive that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him; and that the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven was to be given to the saints of the Most High, Dan. vii. 14, 27. Blinded, as men are now, by their lust of power, and considering themselves as "the saints of the Most High," (though it had been plainly foretold in the writings of their prophets, that the Messiah should call those his people, who had not been his people, and that in him should all nations be blessed), they expected an earthly deliverer, who should subdue their enemies, and restore the kingdom of Israel: nor could they see that, previous to the period in which the saints shall possess the kingdom, the Anointed Prince was to humble himself even to death,—and be afterwards opposed, by a war carried on against him and his peculiar people, by the "ten horns" (kingdoms), and especially by the "little horn," mentioned in Daniel, for so long a period as 1260 days (years). They were ignorant of the nature of the Messiah's kingdom, the import of many of the events foretold in Daniel, and the periods appointed for their fulfilment,—for the book was sealed.

Nor is it surprising that the Jews, as a nation, should entertain very mistaken ideas respecting the nature of Christ's kingdom; for we find that even his own disciples, before his ascension, expected that the kingdom of God should immediately appear, Luke xix. 11. Acts i. 6, and that, like others who look for earthly dominion, they even disputed with one another who should be Prime Minister, Mark ix. 34. It is far more wonderful, that, after the Sealed Book has been opened, men should be so blind and infatuated as to believe that the kingdom of the little horn, the ecclesiastical kingdom, is the kingdom of the Messiah; who confessed before Pilate, that though he was a king, his kingdom was not of this world, (not a worldly kingdom, upheld by worldly power, and governed by worldly maxims.)—Yet his kingdom is in the world, and though despised and hated, the period will come in which "the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever." Rev. xi. 15.

"W
that
peace
there
Fr
we le
drawn
and to
2d, T
becom

Ho
by alm
unnec
state, t
Christi
It may
compar
had the
Christ-
giver in
men in
obliged

The c
been as
persecut
than the
the prier

* Euan,
characteris
to whom h
He was to
earthly peo
cast off all
pride of the
me to the g
his confeder
were to lay
prophecy of
and Isa. xxi
Mighty On
appears on t

THE SECOND SEAL.

"WHEN he had opened the second Seal, there went out another horse that was red, and power was given unto him that sat thereon to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another; and there was given unto him a great sword," Rev. vi. 3, 4.

From this passage, compared with the subsequent parts of this book, we learn two facts: 1st, That the sword of persecution should be drawn against the adherents of him who has gone forth "conquering, and to conquer." The horse was red,* the emblem of bloodshed. 2d, That those who should be agreed in opposing the truth, should yet become the prey of dissension, and destroy one another.

How truly the first hath been verified, has been so amply detailed by almost every commentator and ecclesiastical historian, that it is unnecessary to dwell upon it in this place. It will be sufficient to state, that no less than ten persecutions were carried on against the Christians, before the overthrow of Paganism in the Roman Empire. It may, however, be observed, that all these together are not to be compared with the persecution afterwards carried on, by men who had the audacity to call themselves Christians, against the subjects of Christ—against all who, considering him as the only Lord and law-giver in his kingdom, refused to yield obedience to the mandates of men in matters pertaining to the conscience. Of this I shall be obliged to speak hereafter.

The other fact pointed out by the opening of the second Seal has been as completely verified. No sooner was a period set to the Pagan persecutions, and protection given by Constantine to churchmen, than they followed the same line of conduct that had been pursued by the priests, who had been established before them. That party

* Esau, at his birth, is described as red; Gen. xxv. 25, and he is afterwards characterised as a "cunning hunter," in contrast to his brother, "a plain man," to whom he sold the birthright for one morsel of meat, and so lost the blessing. He was to live by his sword;—and with their sword the Edomites (the bloody, earthly people) pursued their brethren, the people of Israel (the Prince,) and did cast off all pity, tearing perpetually, with continued wrath. Amos i. 11. The pride of the heart of Edom deceived him: his language was, "Who shall bring me to the ground?"—But his hidden things were to be searched out: the men of his confederacy, those who were at peace with him, and who did eat of his bread, were to lay a wound under him; and shame was to cover him, &c. See the prophecy of Obadiah: also Jer. xlix. 7, 22. Ezek. xxv. 8, 14. Ps. cxxxvii. 7, 8, and Isa. xxxiv. 5, 6, and lxiii. 1, 6, which last passage brings to view the same Mighty One coming up from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah, who appears on the white horse, in Rev. xix.

which could gain the ear of authority, never failed to call for the sword of the civil power to destroy heretics—that is, every one who would not submit to them; and when the weaker party, by a change of circumstances, at any time came into favour, they followed exactly the same course against their former oppressors. If we look into any Ecclesiastical History, we meet with nothing but disgusting narrations of outrages, excited by a lust of dominion, carried on by deceit and fraud, and accompanied with murder, desolation, and war!—The never-failing pretext for every outrage was a zeal for the true worship, and the opprobrious appellations bestowed upon those who alternately became the victims of each other's malice, furnish a mass of jargon which can be compared to nothing but the confusion of tongues at Babel.

The work of the rider on the “red horse,” which has not yet ceased, began when the Jews and Romans formed a combination against the Lord and his Christ, Ps. ii., and slew the “man-child” brought forth by the church; Who, notwithstanding, shall rule all nations, having been caught up unto God and to his throne, Rev. xii. The war and strife that have prevailed among pretended Christians, only tend to verify the words of Christ. “He that taketh the sword shall perish with the sword,” Matt. xxvi. 52. “He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity,” Rev. xiii. 10. The “weapons of warfare” to be employed in His kingdom, “are not carnal, but mighty, through God, to the pulling down of strongholds, casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ; 2 Cor. x. 4, who subdues his people by the power of truth, making them such willing subjects that they rejoice when counted worthy to suffer shame for his name, Acts v. 41, and take pleasure in persecutions for his sake, 2 Cor. xii. 10.

By the opening of the second Seal, then, we are instructed, that though the Mighty One, who hath gone forth, shall subdue his enemies, and give the kingdom and dominion under the whole heaven to the saints of the Most High, Dan. vii. 27; yet it was not intended that this should take place at the first coming of the Messiah, at the expiration of certain determined weeks, Dan. ix. 25. For ten kings were first to arise, Dan. vii. 24, who as yet had received no kingdom, Rev. xvii. 12; and after them another mighty king, different from them; not mighty by his own power, Dan. viii. 24, but by power and strength conferred on him by the ten kings, who were to unite

* The
mercha
Greek
should
v. 1. I
about th
18th cen
first six
elated,)
in our c
translate
word. I
myself of
on the bl
this mer
fications
and aust
purgatory
he might

with him in making war against the Lamb, Rev. xvii. 13, 14, casting down the truth to the ground, Dan. viii. 12, and persecuting the saints of the Most High, for a time, and times, and the division of time, Dan. vii. 24.

That the saints were to reign with the Messiah had been so plainly declared, that no one could read Daniel without a conviction of this truth. This was not sealed; it was a part of the writing on the outside of the book,—but the manner in which his kingdom was to be erected and inhabited, and the nature of the opposition which it was to experience, were not fully declared, till explained by himself during his personal ministry upon the earth—by his Apostles, after he had ascended and had endued them with power from on high; and particularly by the unsealing of the book of the Prophet Daniel.

THE THIRD SEAL.

"WHEN he had opened the third Seal, I beheld, and lo, a black horse; and he that sat on him had a pair of balances in his hand. And I heard a voice say, A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny; and see thou hurt not the oil and the wine," Rev. vi. 5, 6.

The colour of this horse is black, appropriated to deceit, cunning, hypocrisy; and the rider, by his accompaniment, is marked out as a merchant,*—of course, not an honest one. But what has merchandise to do with either the advancement or the obstruction of Christ's

* This rider is a taskmaster,—an enslaver of the souls of men, as well as a merchant; for his merchandise is represented as measured, not weighed, and the Greek word *zugos*, for which our Translators here give us a pair of balances, should have been rendered "yoke," as it is in Matt. xi 29, 30. Acts xv. 10. Gal. v. 1. It is translated "yoke" in this passage by a French Protestant, who wrote about the year 1685, and by a Clergyman of Scotland, about the beginning of the 18th century;—and Biblicus, when summing up the import of the opening of the first six Seals, (having perused Archdeacon Woodhouse's Apocalypse Translated,) subjoins the following Note: The word *zugos*, in the third Seal, which, in our common translation, is rendered a pair of balances, Mr. Woodhouse has translated by a "yoke," which is certainly the primary and proper sense of the word. Had I seen his Notes before writing these Strictures, I would have availed myself of the additional lights they afford for explaining the character of the rider on the black horse. I shall here give the substance in a few words: The rider—this merchant, put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples—"unauthorised mortifications and penances, rigorous fastings, vows of celibacy, monkish retirement and austerities, the jargon and repetition of prayers not understood, tales of purgatory, pious frauds, and the worship of saints, relicts, and images"—and, he might have added, human creeds and confessions, enforced by civil penalties.

kingdom? Peter answers this question, "There shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them—through covetousness shall they, with feigned words, make merchandize of you," 2 Pet. ii. 3. Of course, the wheat, barley, wine, and oil, are here put for the word of God, and the comforts of the gospel: nor is this the only place where figures of the same kind are employed. Isaiah, speaking of Him who should swallow up death in victory, says, "The Lord shall make unto all people a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees—wines on the lees, well refined," Isa. xxv. 6. Christ himself compares the word of God to seed, (*i.e.* corn,) sown in the heart; Lk e viii. 5, and the wise virgins are distinguished from the foolish by the oil in their lamps, Matt. xxv. 4. How different is the conduct of these merchants from that of Paul! The false teachers had begun to show themselves even in his time. They accused him of "being crafty, and having caught the Corinthians with guile." He refutes the charge by this simple appeal, "Did I make a gain of you, by any of them whom I sent unto you? Did Titus make a gain of you?" 2 Cor. xii. 17. The Apostles did not proclaim themselves to be lords or rulers, but Christ Jesus as the only Lord, and themselves but servants for his sake, 2 Cor. iv. 5: and their exhortation to the Elders, Bishops, or Presbyters of the churches, which were established under their own eye, was, that they should feed the flock of God, and oversee them, "not for filthy lucre," 1 Pet. v. 2, 3.

The men alluded to in this Seal make merchandize of the wheat and of the barley. Instead of feeding the flock, their only aim is to obtain power, and to enrich themselves, counting gain godliness. The third Seal, then, predicts such a famine as we find described by Amos, "Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord," viii. 11; and shows to what a miserable state of ignorance and darkness mankind were to be reduced, even to believe that the power of heaven might be purchased with money.*

* The rights and privileges of the Clergy were very considerable before the end of the fifth century, and the riches they had accumulated, immense; and both received daily augmentations from the growth of superstition in the sixth, "The arts of a rapacious priesthood were practised upon the ignorant devotion of the simple, and even the remorse of the wicked was made an instrument of increasing the ecclesiastical treasure. For an opinion was propagated with industry among the people, that the remission of their sins was to be purchased by their liberalities to the churches and monks; and that the prayers of departed saints, whose

N
lif
per
the
or
pos
cas
Wh
cust
cou
that
such
in p
the s
woul
appo
truct
Th
ble, 'laid u
"Hea
to ven
and n
The O
still to

efficacy
sented
mediato
* Can
than the
fanaticis
bequeath
of their
deeds? I
is obvious
† It ap
p. 1266,) was then
France, L
speaks of
Clergy tal
D. 502, "any to sell
the Church
excommuni

shall be false teachers
le heresies, even de-
retousness shall they,
1," 2 Pet. ii. 3. Of
e put for the word of
the only place where
peaking of Him who
Lord shall make unto
n the lees—wines on
himself compares the
heart; Lk e viii. 5,
oolish by the oil in
e conduct of these
s had begun to show
a of "being crafty,
e refutes the charge
u, by any of them
"you?" 2 Cor. xii.
be lords or rulers,
but servants for his
Elders, Bishops, or
d under their own
and oversee them,

dize of the wheat
their only aim is to
ain godliness. The
described by Amos,
send a famine in
ter, but of hearing
at a miserable state
reduced, even to
sed with money.*

erable before the end
mmense; and both
in the sixth, "The
nt devotion of the
ument of increasing
ith industry among
d by their liberal-
arted saints, whose

Nor was this kind of merchandizing confined to the period of a man's life in this world: a state of purgatory was contrived from which a person might be delivered, and obtain a safe passport to paradise, by the prevailing prayers of these favourites of heaven; and that sooner or later, according to the value of the bequest left, for this pious purpose; for the length and number of these devotions were, in every case, measured, and proportioned to the price paid for the commodity. Who but these merchants could ever give so rich a return to their customers?—The price payable after death, too! when the money could be of no use to its former possessor.* Is it any wonder, then, that they had an extensive trade, and became at length possessed of such large and princely domains, as to yield them reason to hope that in process of time, their body would become the sole proprietors of the soil of those countries in which they carried on their traffic? This would have been the case, had not their influence been limited to an appointed time, and had not means been predetermined for their destruction. Rev. xvii. 16.

The concluding words of the opening of this Seal are most remarkable, "See thou hurt not the oil and the wine." Such is the restraint laid upon the bearer of the balances—"yoke." It is the fiat of "Heaven!" In spite of the falsehoods and impostures which he was to vend, the Scriptures were still to be preserved as the proper food and nourishment of the followers of the rider on the "white horse." The Old and New Testament, his two witnesses, Rev. xi. 2, were still to be attended to by his sincere followers, though despised by his

efficacy was victorious at the throne of God, were to be bought by offerings presented to the temples which were consecrated to these (Mahuzzim) celestial mediators." *Maclaine's Mosheim*, vol. iii. p. 114, edit. 1790 and 1806.

* Can a greater instance of impolitic blindness in government be adduced, than the encouragement they hold out to interested individuals to play upon the fanaticism, bigotry, and timidity of the infirm and dying, to induce them to bequeath their property for "religious uses," as they call them, to the prejudice of their families, and the evident injury of the public, by giving validity to such deeds? It is high time that an end should be put to these practices. The remedy is obvious.—*Biblicus*.

† It appears, by the Letters of Pope Gregory, (*Ammirat. Opuss. Concil. t. 4. p. 1266*), who lived in the end of the sixth century, that the Church of Rome was then possessed of large estates, not only in Italy, but also in Sicily, in France, Dalmatia, Africa, and in the most distant provinces of Europe; and he speaks of them as ancient possessions. Indeed, before this time, we find the Clergy taking care of their acquisitions. In the Council held by Symmachus, A. D. 502, "it was decreed, that, from that time forward, it should not be lawful for any to sell or alienate any lands or possessions, large or small, that belonged to the Church—that all such contracts were null and void: and that all should be excommunicated who should consent or agree to them."

enemies, and clothed, as it were, with sackcloth ; and that during the whole of the forty and two months that these merchants were to tread down the sanctuary, and pollute it with their commerce, making the house of God a den of thieves !

It is impossible to look at the means employed by Ecclesiastics to silence these witnesses, without admiring that Providence which has preserved them. Their enemies were blinded by their own power, and instead of deliberately establishing a regular plan to alter them—a thing which nothing but the power of heaven could have prevented—they shut them up from the inspection of the people, who thus were deprived of the means of examining into the truth of their pretensions. Ages of ignorance and darkness followed. In the mean time copies of the Scriptures were still multiplied in these abodes of blindness—knowledge at last began to revive, and the art of Printing was introduced, which frustrated their machinations. *

The third Seal being removed, shows what was alluded to by the Angel, when he told Daniel that “the little horn, through his policy, should cause craft to prosper in his hand, and divide the land (into bishoprics) for gain.” Dan. viii. 25., xi. 39.

THE FOURTH SEAL.

“WHEN he had opened the fourth Seal, I looked, and behold, a pale horse ! and his name that sat on him was Death, and Hell followed with him,” Rev. vi. 7, 8.

This rider comes as the necessary consequence of the two former ; for the *death* here introduced is that which is followed by *hell*—“spiritual death !” It is true that the word *hades*, here rendered hell, might be rendered the grave, but the sense will be the same ; for it appears from the whole tenor of the Scriptures, that those in whom

* The Latin Bible was printed in 1462 : in 1483 the Old Testament was printed in Hebrew ; in 1516 the New Testament in Greek, and in a few years after, translations of both into the different languages of Europe. The church was in danger, churchmen were alarmed, and monks declaimed from their pulpits, that “a new language was now discovered, called *Greek*, of which the people should beware, since it was the source of all heresies ; that in this Language was come forth a book called the *New Testament*, which was in every body’s hands, and was full of thorns and briers ; that another language had also started up, which they called *Hebrew*, and that they who learnt it were termed Hebrews.”—The Vicar of Croydon, in a sermon he preached at Paul’s Cross, about this time, expressed himself thus : “We must root out printing, or printing will root out us.”—*Fox’s Acts and Mon.* vol. i. p. 927.

and that during the
enchants to tread
commerce, making the

by Ecclesiastics to
vidence which has
y their own power,
lan to alter them—
ould have prevented
people, who thus
truth of their pre-
ed. In the mean
in these abodes of
the art of Printing
s. *

s alluded to by the
through his policy,
vide the land (into

and behold, a pale
and Hell followed

of the two former ;
ollowed by hell—
ere rendered hell,
the same ; for it
t those in whom

Old Testament was
and in a few years
rope. The church
med from their pul-
reck, of which the
; that in this Lan-
which was in every
r language had also
nt it were termed
l at Paul's Cross,
e printing, or print-

the truth does not take such root as to prevent them from apostacy, when affliction and persecution arise for the word's sake," Mark iv. 17, are excluded from "the first resurrection, and from the number of those over whom the second death hath no power," Rev. xx. 6. The words that immediately follow, in the opening of this fourth Seal, apply to the two former riders as well as to that here brought to view :—

"Power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with the sword, with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth ;" that is, with the sword of persecution, wielded by the rider on the "red horse," which caused many to apostatize from the truth ; with the famine occasioned by the rider who made merchandize of the word ; with death, the lusts of the human heart, to the gratifying of which that merchandize ministered ; for "they that live in pleasure are dead while they live ;" and with "the beasts of the earth, those grievous wolves, which were to enter in, not sparing the flock," Acts xx. 29 : "Prophets appearing in sheep's clothing, while inwardly they are ravening wolves," Matt. vii. 15. Of all the evils here enumerated, that of the false teachers is the greatest ; they are twice introduced—under the third Seal as merchants, causing a famine of the word by their traffic ; and, under the fourth, as wild beasts ; they not only starve, but devour the flock.

But "beasts of the earth" have also another signification assigned to them, which must not be overlooked. In the Revelation they represent "kingdoms," and throughout the book (Daniel), of which this is the opening of one of the Seals, they have no other meaning. We have here, then, an intimation given to us of the means by which these false teachers were to be enabled to do such extensive mischief ; the kings of the earth were to co-operate with them, and, even after the period of the Pagan persecutions, to assist them in wearing out the saints of the Most High.

On this I shall not at present enlarge, as the alliance here alluded to forms a prominent feature in the subsequent parts of this prophetic history ; but content myself with observing that, in the brief outline before us, we have a striking description of the mischief that arose from opposition to the authority, and mistakes respecting the nature of the kingdom of the Messiah, which was called the kingdom of Christ, though, in fact, it was earthly and carnal, dignified with the name of spiritual ; but "to be carnally minded is death." This kingdom which was set up is the kingdom of the little horn—those who maintain it are the people of the prince, who, as Daniel was informed, "should

come and destroy the city and the sanctuary." But of this more hereafter."

THE FIFTH SEAL.

By the opening of this Seal, we are furnished with a display of the havoc occasioned among Christ's flock by the last three riders: "I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the Word of God, and for the testimony which they held, whose blood shall be avenged on them that dwell on the earth, when the number of their fellow-servants also, and their brethren, which are to be killed, as they have been, shall be fulfilled," Rev. vi. 9, 10, 11. Such is the lot appointed to Christ's followers! They must suffer, before they reign with him. But they shall reign, and upon the earth too, Rev. v. 10, when the proper period arrives.

Observe the difference between the persons here mentioned, and the men signified under the fourth Seal. These, by apostacy, to save their goods and life in this world, seeking to please men rather than God, obtain perdition—death, with hell following it: those, by losing their life for Christ's sake, have found it, Matt. x. 39: "they are absent from the body, but present with the Lord," 2 Cor. v. 7; and they know that, "when he shall appear, they shall be like him," 1 John iii. 2, being made partakers of a blessed resurrection, agreeably to the prediction in the sealed book, chap. xii. 2.

The Jews could not understand how it could be possible, after the coming of the Messiah, to whom the "dominion under the whole heaven" was to be given, that his people should have enemies to oppose, and be persecuted and butchered for a long period. They considered the oppressions which they had endured, under the different nations to which they were from time to time brought in subjection, as the "wearing out of the saints of the Most High," predicted by Daniel; and fully expected that, on his appearance on earth, he would immediately set up his everlasting kingdom, and that then "the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven" would be given to them, as the people of God. They did not perceive, though foretold by Daniel (the book being sealed), that the Messiah was to visit the earth twice—first at the termination of a determined number of weeks, "to make an end of sin (sin-offering), and to make reconciliation for iniquity," Dan. ix. 24; and, secondly, after

the fourth beast is "slain and his body given to the burning flame," Dan. vii. 11.; and that, in the interim, the subjects of the Messiah were to be destroyed "by the sword, and by flame, by captivity, and by spoil, many days."

Nor need we wonder at the blindness of God's ancient people, when we see those who call themselves Christians,* applying Christ's second advent to the judgments brought upon the Jews, in the destruction of Jerusalem, and considering as the reign of Christ, the reign of the rider on the black horse; who has been not only an accessory, but a principal, in shedding the blood of those souls, under the altar, who have been for a long time crying out, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?" Rev. vi. 11.

Those who apply the murders here foretold to the persecutions carried on against the first Christians by the heathen Emperors entirely mistake the object of the prediction; and this has arisen, in a great measure, from their adoption of a fanciful theory, by which the events predicted by the opening of these seals are made to follow each other in succession: the contents of each seal being considered as a distinct period, each succeeding period commencing when the preceding has terminated, &c. If we turn to the Sealed Book (Daniel), we shall scarcely find an allusion to these first persecutions, but there (vii. 21) another enemy is mentioned, who "made war with the saints, and prevailed against them:" an enemy who was not to appear till the ten kings had arisen, three of whom were to be "plucked up by the roots," to make room for him, ver. 8—one who was to "wear out the saints of the Most High," ver. 25, not for two or three centuries only, but for "a time, and times, and half a time" (1260 years), and whose enmity against them, instead of ceasing with the overthrow of Paganism in the Roman empire, was to continue till "the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion." Indeed, the answer given to the cry of the slain saints, shows that a period much subsequent to the termination of the heathen persecutions is intended:—

"To each of them were given white robes" (the token of triumph; for, though slain, they are made conquerors and more than conquerors); but "they were told to rest contented yet a little while, till

* Blaney, Dissertation on Daniel's Prophecy of the Seventy Weeks, P. ii. p. 32.—Wintle, Notes on Daniel, p. 150—and others.

the number of their fellow-servants also, and their brethren, who were to be slain like themselves, should be completed," Rev. vi. 11. Now, it can with no truth be said that their number was completed when Constantine came to possess the throne of the empire. On the contrary, the principal slayer was yet to come, as were also the ten kings, by whose power he was to be enabled to perpetrate his crimes; and we know from the sealed book, that he continues to destroy wonderfully, until that period when the "Ancient of Days shall come, and the saints shall possess the kingdom." And, accordingly, to that period, so positively expressed in the sealed book, does the opening of the sixth Seal, which immediately follows, apply, and not to the overthrow of heathenism in the territories which constitute the body of Daniel's fourth beast, as many have been persuaded to believe.

THE SIXTH SEAL.

"I BEHELD, when he had opened the sixth Seal, and lo, there was a *great earthquake*! and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood; and the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig-tree casteth her untimely figs, when shaken of a mighty wind; and the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled up; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places; and the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bond man, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens, and in the rocks of the mountains, and said to the mountains and rocks, fall! on us and hide us from the *Face of Him* that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of *the Lamb*; for the *Great Day* of his wrath is come, and who shall be able to stand?" Rev. vi. 12—17.

It will hardly be contested that in prophetic language, the *sun* is put for imperial or kingly power, the *moon* for the people, considered as the consort of the king, *stars* for subordinate rulers, (or for bishops, when the sun is put for Christ as the king). This was the common symbolical language of the east, and was universally adopted by the astrologers and interpreters of dreams, whose professions were, in ancient times, dignified with the name of sciences. Even so far back as the time of Jacob, we find the same figures applied in a similar manner, "Behold, I have dreamed a dream," said Joseph (Gen.

xxxv
me."
the d
come
howe
were
Indee
cavil,
John
that
Conse
their p
world
them f
their c
misund
the pre
explain
more o
"Th
alluded
object o
undisgu
in Dan
saints, t
tators, m
in view,
what kin
By D
successiv
kingdom
by differ
"ten kin
them, wh
the saint
that he v
down so
given by
passages a
were cast

their brethren, who
 "deleted," Rev. vi. 11.
 "number was completed
 of the empire. On
 "he, as were also the
 "ed to perpetrate his
 "at he continues to
 "Ancient of Days
 "gdom." And, ac-
 "in the sealed book,
 "ately follows, apply,
 "ritories which con-
 "ny have been per-

and lo, there was
 sackcloth of hair,
 heaven fell unto the
 when shaken of a
 all when it is rolled
 out of their places;
 the rich men, and
 y bond man, and
 in the rocks of the
 fall on us and hide
 throne, and from the
 path is come, and

language, the sun is
 people, considered
 rs, (or for bishops,
 was the common
 ly adopted by the
 fessions were, in
 Even so far back
 applied in a similar
 mid Joseph (Gen.

xxxvii. 9), "The sun, moon, and eleven stars, made obeisance to me." How does his father (the king, head of the family) interpret the dream? "Shall I, and thy mother, and thy brethren, indeed, come to bow down ourselves to thee, to the earth?"—The dream, however, was verified; and we may observe, too, that his brethren were the heads or rulers of the tribes that descended from Jacob. Indeed, in the passage under consideration, there is no room left for cavil, as to the general signification of the terms here adopted, for John drops the figurative and symbolical language, and plainly tells us that he means "kings, great and rich men, bond and free men." Consequently the earthquake, which shakes the kings and rulers from their place, refers, of necessity, not to the world natural, but to the world politic—to those commotions, tumults, and wars, which hurl them from their former spheres, the heaven politic, in which they run their course. But the particular application has been so generally misunderstood, and such uncommon pains have been taken to apply the prediction to events which cannot, in any way, be considered as explaining the Sealed Book, that I must, to clear this point, employ more of the reader's time than would otherwise have been necessary.

"The host of heaven," the leading figure in the sixth Seal, is alluded to more than once in the Sealed Book (Daniel), and the main object of this part of the Revelation given to John was, to show, in undisguised terms, to the servants of Jesus Christ, that this "host" in Daniel, instead of meaning either Jewish priests or Christian saints, to one or other of which it has been applied by all commentators, means the heaven politic—kings and great men. Keeping this in view, we shall be at little loss to discover what "earthquake" and what kings are signified in the passage before us.

By Daniel (chap. vii.) we are informed of four kingdoms that were successively to arise, the fourth of which was to be different from all kingdoms, and "devour the whole earth." This, as has been proved by different writers, was the Roman empire. Out of this kingdom "ten kings" were to arise; and after them another "different from them, which was to subdue three of these kings," and "wear out the saints." And of this same king we are informed (chap. viii.) that he was to "wax great, even to the host of heaven, and cast down some of them to the ground." Now, from the explanation given by John of the meaning of "the host," we see that these two passages apply to the same fact, and that those of "the host," which were cast down by the little horn, as mentioned in the one, were

three in number, viz., the three mentioned in the other, that were "plucked up by the roots" to make room for him. On this point, I wish to be brief at present, as I must hereafter be more circumstantial; but thus much was here necessary to ascertain what kings are alluded to in the sixth seal.

It must not be overlooked, that the fourth kingdom was only "one," till the period arrived in which "ten" were formed from it. But "the earthquake" overthrows not *one* king only, but *many*, and therefore refers to some period subsequent to that in which there was but one king, or ruling power; and, consequently, has no relation to the overthrow of Paganism in the Roman empire, which continued to have but one head for a considerable time after that period. It is worse than trifling to endeavour to make the ejection of one hierarchy for the substitution of another, to serve as an explanation of this earthquake.

"The earthquake" here brought to view, overthrows *the host*;—not a king, but kings—not some kings only, but *the kings* of the earth—all, without exception; and, therefore, without the strangest perversion, cannot be applied to any period prior to the existence of these Kings. Now, if we examine Daniel, we find no earthquake, no destruction of any kind, sweeping away the kings set up out of his fourth great kingdom, until the "kingdom of the Stone, hewn out without hands," smites the great image upon his feet, destroying the ten kingdoms signified by the toes (chap. ii.):—on the contrary, they are represented as continuing to reign, till "their thrones are cast down by the mighty shaking," which makes way for the Son of Man when he comes to receive "dominion, and glory, and a kingdom," so extensive that "all people, nations, and languages, shall serve him."

The overthrow of Paganism, to which this earthquake has been very generally applied, only produced a change in the head of the empire. Five of the seven heads (Rev. xii. 3, xvii. 7, 10) had fallen before John wrote his visions: one of them existed, viz., the Heathen Imperial head: another was yet to come, the Christian Imperial head; the substitution of which for the preceding only caused a change in the *state religion*. This was to continue a short space, and be followed by an eighth, a "plural head"—ten kings who were to give their power to the ecclesiastical beast, and wage war with the *Lamb*, "who shall overcome them," Rev. xvii. 14, in the battle of that "great day of God Almighty," which is appointed for their de-

* In
heaven.
common

the other, that were
im. On this point, I
be more circumstan-
ertain what kings are

dom was only "one,"
formed from it. But
but *many*, and there-
which there was but
as no relation to the
which continued to
er that period. It is
tion of one hierarchy
explanation of this

erthrows *the host*;—
out *the kings* of the
without the strangest
r to the existence of
find no earthquake,
e kings set up out of
the Stone, hewn out
his feet, destroying
:—on the contrary,
"their thrones are
s way for the Son of
glory, and a king-
and languages, shall

earthquake has been
in the head of the
rvii. 7, 10) had fallen
ed, viz., the Heathen
Christian Imperial
ding only caused a
continue a short space,
ten kings who were
d wage war with the
14, in the battle of
pointed for their de-

struction. Rev. xvi. 14. This is "the earthquake" mentioned in the sixth seal. Indeed, in the words which immediately follow the description given of it, and in which John explains his own terms, we find that he substitutes "the great day" for "the great earthquake," using these two terms synonymously, as they are used in other places of the Scriptures.

It is true that before that period, which is emphatically called "the great earthquake," and "the great day," there were to be various "earthquakes in divers places, nation rising against nation, and kingdom against kingdom." Mat. xxiv. Mark xiii. Luke xxi. But these were merely partial, not total eclipses—changes only in the political spheres, not their annihilation: Such were the convulsions which attended the subversion of Imperial Rome; the setting up of the ten kings, and the overthrow of three of them, to make room for the king of "impudent countenance." The extinction of the light of the heaven politic was not to be until "the glad news of the reign of the Messiah had first been proclaimed in all the world," and his followers been made to suffer that "persecution and tribulation" which he taught them to expect from all nations. "But," says Christ, "in those days, *after* that tribulation, (when the time appointed for cleansing the sanctuary has arrived,) the sun shall be darkened, the moon shall not give her light, the stars shall fall from *the* heaven, (politic) and the powers (*Dynameis*, executive powers) of *the* heaven shall be shaken;—then shall appear the sign of the Son of Man in *the* heaven:—(this darkening of the sun, falling of the stars, and shaking of the powers of the heaven politic, is "the sign," for this is effected by his power, whatever may be the second causes employed); and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see *the Son of Man* (mentioned by Daniel) coming in the clouds of the heaven (in the political tempests gathering in the heaven politic) with power and great glory;"—for then it will appear manifest that all these changes are effected by "*Him* who reigns and must reign till all his enemies," the opposers of his kingdom, "be made his footstool."

Such is the language employed in the New Testament, to describe the inevitable destruction which awaits "the kingdoms of this world." The Old Testament speak in a similar manner respecting "the great

* In all these places, the reading in the original is with the article, *the* heaven. The omission of the article in these and many other places, in our common version, tends very much to obscure the sense.

earthquake—the great day—the great and terrible day of the Lord—the day of His wrath,” alluded to in the sixth seal. The Psalmist, Ps. cx., speaking of the victory of the Messiah over his enemies, ruling “a people made willing by his own power,” mentions the oath of Jehovah, by which “a royal priesthood” is conferred on him; and adds, “the Lord at thy right hand shall strike through kings in the day of his wrath. He shall judge among the Heathen (the Gentiles, to whom it is given to tread down the holy city, Rev. xi.) He shall fill (their kingdoms) with the dead bodies: He shall wound *the head** over many countries (the eighth head of Daniel’s fourth beast, Rev. xvii. 11.) He shall drink of the brook in the way; therefore shall he lift up *the head*,” (his own *head*, or sovereignty, which shall be made manifest, when he shall take to him his great power, Rev. xi. 17.

The Prophet Joel, ch. ii. iii., as explained by Peter, Acts ii., gives a similar account of the setting up of *the Messiah’s* kingdom, and its final triumph: “I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, and I will shew wonders in the heavens, and in the earth, blood and fire, and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the Lord come. Proclaim this among the Gentiles, prepare war, rouse the mighty men, call out the men of war, beat your ploughshares into swords (make every exertion to maintain your power) let the weak say, I am strong: Assemble yourselves and come, all ye heathen, gather yourselves together come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat; (literally *the valley of the judgment of the Lord*;) for there will I sit to judge all the heathen. Put in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe. The sun and the moon shall be darkened, and the stars shall withdraw their shining. The heavens and the earth shall shake; but the Lord is the hope of his people. Then shall Jerusalem be holy.”—“Then shall the sanctuary be cleansed,” Dan. viii. 14.

Isaiah, speaking of the period in which “Jerusalem shall be a quiet habitation, a tabernacle which shall not be taken down; where the Lord, our Judge, our Lawgiver, our King, will save his oppressed

* Not the heads, as in our common version. The same Hebrew word occurs many times in the Old Testament, and is always rendered in the singular number by our translators, except in very few instances, in all of which instances they are wrong, though in none of them does the license they have taken obscure the sense, as it does in this passage. The word occurs within two lines after, and there they have rendered it *the head*.

people
people
“Co
earth
forth
his su
hath
out;
melt
solve
their
a fall
(in th
of rec
The
“the
dicted
heave
an all
mous i
asham
Mount
Isa. x
In th
brevity
nounce
throw
the des
the gre
is “th
“is to
this day
are to s
• Whe
the sun,
object sp
bright lig
played in
is mentio
receives i
Rev. xvi.

the day of the Lord—
 seal. The Psalmist,
 over his enemies,
 ;” mentions the oath
 conferred on him; and
 through kings in *the*
 heathen (the Gentiles,
 Rev. xi.) He shall
 shall wound *the head*•
 fourth beast, Rev.
 ray; therefore shall
 nty, which shall be
 eat power, Rev. xi.

eter, Acts ii., gives
 ’s kingdom, and its
 all flesh,
 the earth, blood and
 into darkness, and
 ble day of the Lord
 ntiles, prepare war,
 heat your
 to maintain your
 Assemble your-

together
the valley of the
 ge all the heathen.
 e. The
 rs shall withdraw
 shall shake; but
 shall Jerusalem
 1,” Dan. viii. 14.
 asalem shall be a
 ken down; where
 ave his oppressed

Hebrew word occurs
 in the singular num-
 of which instances
 have taken obscure
 h in two lines after,

people;”—where “the inhabitants shall not say, I am sick, and the people that dwell therein shall be forgiven their iniquity,” exclaims, “Come near, ye nations, to hear, and hearken ye people: let the earth hear, and all that is therein; the world, and all things that come forth of it; for the indignation of the Lord is upon all nations, and his fury upon all their armies; he hath utterly destroyed them; he hath delivered them to the slaughter. Their slain also shall be cast out; their carcases shall stink, and the mountains (kingdoms) shall be melted with their blood; and all the host of heaven shall be dissolved, and the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll; and all their host shall fall down, as the leaf falleth off from the vine, and as a falling fig from the fig tree: for my sword shall be bathed in heaven, (in the blood of kings) in the day of the Lord’s vengeance, the year of recompense for the controversy of Sion,” Isa. xxxiv. 1—8.

These passages may suffice to shew that, throughout the Scriptures, “the giving of the kingdom to the saints of the Most High” is predicted by, not a partial, but a total obscuration of the lights of the heaven politic, and that, wherever this total obscuration is mentioned, an allusion is made to the same period;• for the Prophets are unanimous in declaring that “the moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed, when the Lord of hosts (the king of kings) shall reign in Mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before his ancients gloriously,” Isa. xxiv. 23.

In the above statement, I have endeavoured to prove, with as much brevity as was consistent with perspicuity, that the earthquake, announced by the opening of the sixth seal, has no relation to the overthrow of Paganism by Constantine and his successors; but describes the destruction that will be brought upon the “kings of the earth, in the great day of the wrath of the Lamb.” At that period, not only is “the sun to become black as sackcloth,” but “the moon” also “is to be confounded and become as blood.” This shows, that in this day of wrath, the people, “even the bond men and free men,” are to suffer along with their rulers; and all the splendour and pride

• When the destruction of any particular people or kingdom is predicted by the sun, moon, &c., *being darkened*, the language is generally limited to the object spoken of: as the fall of Egypt predicted by Ezekiel, xxxii. 8. “All the bright lights of heaven will I make dark over thee.” The same figures are employed in predicting the destruction of ancient Babylon, Isa. xlii. ; but the city is mentioned by name; and the language in which the sentence is denounced receives its full accomplishment in Babylon the Great, the Mother of Harlots, Rev. xvi. and xviii.

of the nations are to be brought to ruin, by those bloody wars which shall precede or introduce a new order of things. I am aware that some commentators (the least exceptionable upon the whole) maintain that Antichrist will be destroyed, not by arms, but by the power of truth. They have been led into this opinion by the command given to Christians, when persecuted in one city to flee into another, Matt. x. 23, and not to avenge themselves, Rom. xii. 9; but to imitate the example of Christ, who, "when he suffered, threatened not, but committed himself to Him that judgeth righteously," 1 Pet. ii. 2, 3. This, however, only shows, that, as Christians cannot take the sword, the Antichristian power must be destroyed by others. The dominion of error and falsehood shall be overthrown by the prevalence of the truth; but by other means, even "by violence shall the great city, Babylon, be thrown down," Rev. xvii. 21. In "the day of the Lord's vengeance, the year of recompense," Isa. xxxiv. 8, the iniquitous political fabric shall be "rewarded double, according to her own works," and "the cup of blood and desolation which she hath filled to others, shall be filled to her double," Rev. xviii. 6.

As the "great earthquake" refers to the world politic, so must the "mountains, islands, dens, and rocks of the mountains." Indeed, we find the principal term so applied by Jeremiah, li. 25, to a kingdom, that of Babylon: "Behold, I am against thee, *O Destroying Mountain!*" and in Daniel also, we find the same term employed to denote a kingdom, even the kingdom of the Messiah, Dan. ii., "The Stone which became a *mountain*, and filled the whole earth," is there employed to intimate that "the God of Heaven will establish a *kingdom*, which shall never be destroyed." If, then, the term *mountains* signifies *kingdoms, islands* must signify their dependencies; and we can be at little loss to understand the minor expressions, *dens* and *rocks* of these mountains, introduced here as hiding places, or places in which the kings and their people seek refuge. They are the same to which they have always resorted, when threatened with danger, viz., their armies and resources of every kind, which shall completely fail them, or be turned against them, at the period of this dreadful commotion and earthquake, which is afterwards, in this book, called "the battle of that great day of God Almighty, Rev. xvi. 14.

That this sixth Seal has no relation whatever to those events to which commentators have generally applied it, will farther appear evident by attending to the sweeping extent of the expressions that follow: "The heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together."

the bloody wars which
 I am aware that
 (on the whole) main-
 tains, but by the power
 on by the command
 to flee into another,
 xii. 9; but to imi-
 tated, threatened not,
 eously," 1 Pet. ii. 2,
 ans cannot take the
 red by others. The
 crown by the preva-
 y violence shall the
 21. In "the day
 " Isa. xxxiv. 8, the
 ole, according to her
 tion which she hath
 xviii. 6.

politic, so must the
 rains." Indeed, we
 l. 25, to a kingdom,
Destroying Moun-
 m employed to de-
 ah, Dan. ii., "The
 hole earth," is there
 ill establish a king-
 he term *mountains*
 tendencies; and we
 ressions, *dens* and
 g places, or places
 e. They are the
 n threatened with
 kind, which shall
 the period of this
 vards, in this book,
 y, Rev. xvi. 14.
 o those events to
 ill farther appear
 expressions that
 s rolled together."

As the writing contained in a scroll, which is visible and legible while spread out, cannot be seen at all, but disappears entirely when the scroll is rolled up, so "the heaven politic," here mentioned, vanishes from view, departs, passes away, and is completely annihilated, at the time of this great earthquake; and every mountain—not a part only, or even the whole of any one kingdom, but every kingdom—every thing known by the name of dominion among men—and every island were removed. Now, we know from the Sealed Book that they were to be removed to make room for a kingdom that shall never be destroyed, Dan. ii. 44; and that this kingdom, even the kingdom of the Son of Man, the Messiah, is that which is to "break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms"—not at a period at which a parcel of pagan priests should lose their employment—but when "the beast shall be slain, and his body destroyed and given to the burning flame, Dan. vii. 11—in the great day of the wrath of the Lamb!—Who shall be able to stand?" Rev. vi. 17. "Take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be over-charged with surfeiting and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares: for as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth. Watch ye, therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man," Luke xxi. 34—36.

In the seventh chapter of the Revelation, which may be either considered as an appendix to the sixth, or as a preface to the seventh Seal, we are informed of a number of particulars respecting the subjects belonging to the kingdom of the God of Heaven:—1. That the reason why they are not overcome by the enemies, spiritual and temporal, which are thus for so long a period to assail them, is, because they are protected by God as his *sealed* property. 2. That they are composed of "a great multitude which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and peoples, and tongues." This was a point by no means well understood, till the sealed parts of Daniel's prophecies were explained. On the contrary, the Jews instead of considering "the Gentiles as fellow-heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of the promise in the Messiah by the Gospel—a secret which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men," Eph. iii. 3, 5—believed that "the people of the saints of the Most High," meant the seed of Israel according to the flesh; and that every other people should be made their subjects and tributaries. 3. That

the Christian religion, instead of securing to its professors ease, pleasure, wealth, and power, the darling objects of the subjects of Antichrist, and who yet fancy themselves Christians, should expose them to great tribulation. 4. That, notwithstanding all the contempt poured out upon them, and the numberless dangers and trials to which they are exposed, at last they are clothed in white robes—robes washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb—obtain the palm of victory, and a place before the throne of God; and therefore, 5. They ascribe "Salvation to our God, who sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb."

RECAPITULATION.

The sum, then, of this truth, declared by the opening of these six Seals, amounts briefly to this:—

1. That, at the time appointed, the Messiah was sent to establish a kingdom, agreeably to the predictions in the Sealed Book of Daniel.

2. That the subjects of the Messiah's kingdom were to be persecuted and opposed by the world, and particularly by the rulers and subjects of Daniel's fourth great empire—a persecution which began as soon as Christ showed himself on the earth (for even the murder of the innocents at Bethlehem was perpetrated in enmity to his kingdom), and will continue till "the Rider on the white horse" shall appear as the conqueror.

3. That false teachers, from the very commencement of the Christian dispensation, and particularly when armed as a body with the power of the civil magistrate, were to oppose the progress of the truth, convert religion into a trade (*see the Note, p. 27.*) and act a conspicuous part in the war carried on against the Prince of the host.

4. That, in consequence of this, many apostatized from the truth, even the whole body of the worshippers of the "little horn," being falsely said to live, while they were in fact dead—so dead to the spirit of Christianity, that they joined their persecuting rulers in killing those who held fast the word of God, and thought that they were rendering God service—being thus instructed by their corrupt teachers "whose policy insures prosperity to their craft," Dan. viii. 25.

5. That, notwithstanding the delay of the day of retribution for all these murders, the innocent blood which has been shed shall be avenged; and that those who suffer for the truth are made partakers of a blessed immortality.

6. These h
long th
will be
persuad
Christ;
the Lan
which
judgme
Acco
going f
followi
by fancy
been ve
are take
contains
Seals, a
seventh
for the p
first six
is held t
would in
policy of
stretched
standard
Such
lowed to
in which
method a
compose
Another
by "a st
is "to de
by "king
and dom
period, fo
ents by
which sig
by a "lit
at length

fessors ease, pleasure,
subjects of Antichrist,
and expose them to great
contempt poured out
als to which they are
—robes washed and
the palm of victory,
fore, 5. They ascribe
throne, and to the

6. That, at the period appointed for the "great earthquake," all these kingdoms shall be overthrown, in spite of every exertion to prolong their political existence; that then the kingdoms of this world will become what they have never been, though their false teachers persuade them otherwise, "the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ;"—and that this takes place at "the great day of the wrath of the Lamb!"—"the great and terrible day of the Lord!"—expressions which evidently mean the same as "the last day!"—"the day of judgment!"—"the sound of the last trumpet!"

opening of these six

as sent to establish a
ed Book of Daniel.
were to be persecuted
e rulers and subjects
which began as soon
n the murder of the
to his kingdom), and
shall appear as the

According to this view, then, those hypotheses which make the going forth of the different "riders" to be so many distinct periods following each other in order and in succession of time, are supported by fancy alone. Ever since the days of Mede, the following system has been very generally adopted in explaining the Revelation:—The *Seals* are taken in their order as seven successive periods, the last of which contains *seven trumpets*, all of which are subsequent to the first six *Seals*, and also represent so many distinct periods in succession. The *seventh trumpet*, in like manner, is divided into seven distinct periods, for the pouring out of *seven vials*, all of which are subsequent to the first six trumpets. This is laid down for the sake of method! and it is held to be a sufficient reason for rejecting any explanation, that it would introduce confusion into this order. In imitation of the savage policy of Procrustes, whatever in the book is too short for this bed, is stretched to its length, and everything too long is cut down to the standard.

nnement of the
rmed as a body with
e the progress of the
e, p. 27,) and act a
e Prince of the host.
ized from the truth,
"little horn," being
ad—so dead to the
uting rulers in killing
ught that they were
eir corrupt teachers.
Dan. viii. 25.

of retribution for all
been shed shall be
are made partakers

Such is the method, with a few variations, which has been followed to explain the Visions of John, only because such is the order in which he narrates them. Let us examine, for a moment, a similar method applied to interpret the Visions of Daniel:—His "great image," composed of four metals, represent so many kingdoms in succession. Another kingdom, "the kingdom of the God of heaven," represented by "a stone cut out without hands," is then to be established, which is "to destroy all other kingdoms, and endure for ever." But here, by "kingdoms," we must not understand kingdoms, but "the rule and dominion of pagan priests;" for we find, subsequently to this period, four other kingdoms mentioned by Daniel, and which he represents by "four great beasts," the last of which has "ten horns," which signify ten kingdoms more in succession. These are followed by a "little horn" or king, who performs prodigies of wickedness, till at length the judgment is, and sovereignty is given to the people of

the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an "everlasting kingdom." But order and method requires that we here limit the import of the word "everlasting;" for we find, after this period, two empires represented by a "ram" and a "he goat;" the latter of which is followed by four other kingdoms, out of one of which comes "another little horn,"* no way inferior in wickedness to the one before mentioned. This new little horn must be explained (no matter how, for order and method require it,) by the prophecy of the "seventy weeks;" and, in the last of these weeks, we must expect the kings of the north and south to appear, the last of whom shall be destroyed when Michael shall stand up for Daniel's people! This is Daniel's order of narration, and, therefore, such must be the method followed to explain him. What would be thought of the expositor who should propose such a series of absurdities?

However plausible and ingenious any exposition of the Revelation may appear, if it proposes any thing that has not a direct reference to the contents of the sealed book of Daniel, as the plain and obvious sense of what was "shut up and closed till the time of the end," it must be rejected by those who wish to "hear the words of this prophecy;" for, only by attention to the voice of "the faithful and true Witness," in opposition to the comments and glosses of those who substitute darkness for light, can a right understanding of the book that he has opened, and of "the Revelation" by which he has opened it, be obtained. Nor is it surprising that those who so little understand the nature of Christ's kingdom, as to take that of "Antichrist," in one or other of its forms, for his, should still consider the vision, "as the words of a book that is sealed, which men deliver to one that is learned, saying, read this, I pray thee; and he saith, I cannot, for *it is sealed*; and the book is delivered to him that is not learned, saying, read this, I pray thee; and he saith, I am *not learned*." But, when "the terrible one is brought to nought, and the scorner is consumed, and all that watch for iniquity are cut off; that make a man

* Some late expositors have absolutely maintained, that in these two passages in Daniel, by the "little horn," two very different powers are predicted; because, among other reasons, the opinion that they are one, "renders Daniel liable to the charge of unvarying repetition!" The leading *sealed* truths in Daniel, and *open* truths in the Revelation, have respect only to two facts—the reign of Christ and of Antichrist—the punishment and destruction of the latter, and the triumph of the former. Both Daniel and John are chargeable with an "unvarying repetition" of these facts: yea, the like charge might be brought against Moses and all the prophets; but often, as they have repeated them, they will never appear plain to those who indulge in fancy and hunt for variety.

"AND V
heaven

* Some
Seal, there

an "everlasting king-
here limit the import
is period, two empires
the latter of which is
which comes "another
the one before men-
(no matter how, for
ne "seventy weeks;"
the kings of the north
be destroyed when
his is Daniel's order
method followed to
positor who should

on of the Revelation
ot a direct reference
e plain and obvious
ime of the end," it
e words of this pro-
he faithful and true
esses of those who
anding of the book
which he has opened
who so little under-
at of "Antichrist,"
onsider the vision,
men deliver to one
he saith, I cannot,
that is not learned,
not learned." But,
he scorner is con-
that make a man

in these two passages
e predicted; because,
rs Daniel liable to the
as in Daniel, and open
e reign of Christ and
r, and the triumph of
unvarying repetition"
st Moses and all the
never appear plain to

an offender for a word, and lay a snare for him that reproveth,"—"in that day shall the deaf hear the words of the book, and the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity, and out of darkness: the meek also shall increase their joy in the Lord, and the poor among men shall rejoice in the Holy One of Israel," Isa. xxix. "Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased none of the wicked shall understand, but the wise shall understand," Dan. xii.

All the "riders" commence their course nearly at the same period, though, in the natural order of things, the Messiah must show himself before he can be opposed; the truth must be proclaimed before error and falsehood can impeach it; and false doctrine must be preached before it can bring forth its baneful fruit;—which is the very order given to the riders. Allowing only a short time, then, for this natural order, the riders synchronize with each other through their whole course:—The conquering king is still upon his "white horse;"—the persecutor, who began his work with the death of the Messiah, (if not with the death of the innocents), is still upon his "red horse;"—the rider on the "black horse," who commenced his career in the days of the Apostles, still carries on his traffic, (still keeps his followers "under the yoke" of the doctrines and commandments of men,)—and "death and hell" still their prey.—And so it will be till "the great earthquake" hurls the kings of the earth from their thrones, as a righteous judgment upon them for "giving their power and strength" to the ecclesiastical horn, which, ever since its erection, has "cast down the truth to the ground, and practised iniquity, through policy, causing craft to prosper in his hand;"—for "the beast, and the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, shall both be cast alive into a lake of fire," Rev. xix. 20, in the "great day" of the wrath of the Lamb, agreeably to the prediction contained in the book, Dan. vii. 11, from which the seals have been removed by "the Lion of the tribe of Judah!"

THE SEVENTH SEAL.

"AND when he had opened the seventh Seal, there was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour.* And I saw the seven

* Some read the first verse thus, "And when he had opened the seventh Seal, there was silence in heaven as that of the midnight hour."—But whether

angels which stood before God ; and to them were given seven trumpets. And another Angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer ; and there was given to him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar, which was before the throne : and the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God, out of the Angel's hand. And the Angel took the censer and filled it with the fire of the altar, and cast it into the earth ; and there were voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and an earthquake," Rev. viii. 1—5.

The "heaven" here spoken of, refers evidently to the scene of the vision, chap. iv., as does also the "half hour ;"* for the silence is maintained only while the preparations are making for the ensuing representation ; and when every thing is ready, it is terminated by "voices and thunderings." In the interim, the end and design of all the services that were performed in the typical sanctuary are pointed out by the office and work of "the Angel, who offers much incense with the prayers of all the saints," in virtue of which "they ascend up before God," and are accepted. That the word "angel" signifies "messenger" will not be questioned by any one who is at all conversant in Scripture phraseology. Here, then, we have "the Angel" or "Messenger of the Covenant" brought to view—the Lord, "who had come to his temple," agreeably to the prediction in Mal. iii. 1 ;—the "merciful and faithful High Priest, who hath made reconciliation for the sins of the people ;"—the Great High Priest, that is passed into the heavens, *Jesus, the Son of God*," Heb. ii. 17, iv. 14 ; offering that incense by which alone the persons and services of his saints are made acceptable—even the merits of his own perfect obedience and atonement.

We have seen, from the opening of the preceding Seals, that the events, which they predict, do not follow in such an order and succession of time, as to make the business of the second commence when the first terminates, and the business of the third when that of the second is finished, by a regular succession ; but that, on the contrary, all the five first Seals relate to the commencement and progress

read thus or not, might it not be joined to chapter vii., and "the silence" considered as significant of "the mystery of God being finished," which it "shall be, when the seventh angel shall have sounded his trumpet?" Thus the subject of the Trumpets, beginning at verse 2, might be viewed distinct from all the Seals, as the visions described after all the trumpets are sounded, are distinct from them, although all respect the same events, and illustrate the Sealed Book.

* See the previous Note, commencing on p. 45.

of the
and t
conter
Seal :
the be
predic
On th
—eve
the ce
earth
forewa
the w
Suppo
but ra
send p
sword,
that "
1 Cor.
of Chr
nations
of his
father
taketh
He tha
cution)
and he
that pe
to follo
proclai
mere o
and his
specting
prince"
immedi
stances
generall
derings,
followe
but seve
these ex

seven trum-
 r, having a gol-
 e, that he should
 en altar, which
 with the prayers
 Angel's hand.
 re of the altar,
 nd thunderings,

the scene of the
 or the silence is
 for the ensuing
 s terminated by
 l and design of
 sanctuary are
 who offers much
 f which "they
 word "angel"
 r one who is at
 we have "the
 view—the Lord,
 ediction in Mal.
 o hath made re-
 High Priest, that
 Heb. ii. 17, iv.
 and services of
 his own perfect

Seals, that the
 n order and suc-
 cond commence
 d when that of
 nat, on the con-
 ent and progress

the silence" con-
 " which it "shall
 Thus the subject
 stinct from all the
 ended, are distinct
 the Sealed Book.

of the warfare carried on between "the Rider on the white horse," and those who oppose his kingdom; and the sixth to the issue of that contest. The case is exactly the same with regard to the seventh Seal: for, though, of necessity, in removing the Seals in order, from the book of Daniel, the seventh must be last opened, the events here predicted do not take place subsequently to those of the other Seals. On the contrary, they have nearly the same time of commencement—even the period in which *the Messenger of the Covenant* "took the censer and filled it with the fire of the altar, and cast into the earth;"—for, though he came "with the glad tidings of peace," he forewarned his disciples that his message would not be so received by the world:—"I am come," says he, "to send fire upon the earth. . . Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you, nay; but rather division,"—Luke xii. 49—"Think not that I am come to send peace on earth; I am not come to send peace on earth, but a sword," Matt. x. 34. From this and the passages first quoted, we see that "sending fire on the earth," means "sending a sword." (See 1 Cor. iii. 13, 14.) This was to follow the profession of the name of Christ; nor need we wonder, if the disciples were "hated of all nations," when we find, that among "a man's foes were to be those of his own household." "But," says Christ, "he that loveth father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me. . . he that taketh not up his cross and followeth after me, is not worthy of me. He that findeth his life (by conforming to the world to avoid persecution) shall lose it: (he shall not partake in the first resurrection:) and he that loseth his life for my sake, shall find it." We see, then, that persecution, strife, and contention, are predicted here, as destined to follow the preaching of the gospel—the very same fact that was proclaimed by the opening of the second Seal. But, instead of a mere outline of the history of the warfare between the crowned Rider and his enemies, (which was all that the preceding Seals gave respecting Daniel's "Prince of the Host," and "the people of the prince" that was to fight against him,) here a farther, and, as we shall immediately see, a very particular detail of all the leading circumstances of the contest is brought to view: for we are not only told generally what followed the preaching of the Word, namely, "thunderings, and lightnings, and an earthquake;"—great noise and wrath, followed by a wonderful change in the rule or government of the earth, but seven angels are introduced to explain the events alluded to in these expressions, and to proclaim, as by sound of trumpet, the au-

thentic and authorised interpretation of the Sealed Book, so far as it relates to these events.

THE FIRST TRUMPET.

"The seven angels, who had the seven trumpets, prepared themselves to sound. The first angel sounded, and there followed fire and hail mingled with blood; and they were cast upon the earth; and the third part of the earth was burnt up,* and the third part of the trees was burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up," Rev. viii. 6. 7.

Sending *fire* on the earth, we have just seen, means, in prophetic language, the same as sending a *sword*,—contention and strife, followed by bloodshed. *Hail* denotes in general the judgments of God upon a people.† *Trees* signify great men, and *grass* the lower orders: thus, in the fourth chapter of Daniel, "a great tree" represents Nebuchadnezzar,—the earth, in which were its roots, his kingdom,—and "the tender grass of the field, his people;‡ and the same figures are also applied to the people of God, as distinguished from the world; as in Isaiah lxi. 3, where they are called "trees of righteousness, the planting of Jehovah," and in other places;§ and therefore, when this figure occurs, its application to the one or to the other can be decided only by the context.

By this trumpet not only is fire cast upon the earth, but from the context we learn that it was "fire of the altar." Therefore, the quarrels and bloodshed here mentioned, are chiefly to be attributed to

* *The third part of the earth was burnt up.* These words are omitted in the common version. They are found in the Vulgate, and in many good MSS.

† See Ex. ix. 23. Isa. xxvii. 2, 17. Ps. lxxviii. 47, 48. Ezek. xiii. 13. Among the Eastern Magi, *hail* and *fire*, employed as symbols, had a similar signification. Achmetes, in his Interpretation of Dreams, cap. 191, out of the *Rules of the Indians, Persians, and Egyptians*, says, "If any shall seem to see hail fall any where, let him expect a sudden hostile attack. . . . If the hail shall have hurt the stalks of wheat or barley, in the place where the stalks are so broken, warlike slaughters shall happen." And in cap. 159, 160, he says, that *fire*, if it shall seem to burn any thing, or any one, signifieth death, war, fightings, punishment, and affliction.

‡ See also Ezek. ch. xxi. and Isa. ch. ii. Achmetes, the author mentioned in the preceding note, also puts *trees* for great men.

§ The church is God's *husbandry*. Christ is "the true vine," and his people "the branches." Those that abide in him bring forth much fruit, John xv. 5. "They spring up among the grass, as willows by the water courses," Isa. xlv. 4. But if any man abide not in him, he is cast forth like the branches that are withered, (or burnt up, as in the passage before us) "which are gathered and cast into the fire."

the di
so mu
kingdo
and w
all tru
the ble
minion
"fire a
if we
employ
of the
"destr
kings.
From
hail" w
the emp
effects,
they we
the bea
latter pe
the sight
ing the c
of the e
As to
thing is a
introduc
would le
spirit wh
tianty to
shown its
not mark
putes, as
ticular, w
considered
which is
were only
the openin
In corre
panying ju
exactly the

the disputes among ecclesiastics—disputes which were carried on with so much enmity and brutality, that not only the subjects of Christ's kingdom, who were taught by their Master to expect nothing else, and who, generally speaking, have always been reckoned heretics by all true churchmen; but mankind in general, became the victims of the blood-thirsty fury of the various contenders for ecclesiastical dominion. Nor was this mischief confined within narrow bounds—the “fire and hail mingled with blood, were cast upon the earth;” and, if we turn to Daniel, vii. 23, we shall find that “the earth,” when employed without limitation, includes not only the proper territories of the fourth empire, but those of the three preceding ones, which it “destroyed and brake in pieces,” before the establishment of the ten kings.

From this, it follows, that the commencement of the “fire and hail” was while the Cæsars still held the sovereignty of Rome, and the empire remained unbroken—though we learn by their ultimate effects, the burning up of “the third part” of the trees and grass, that they were to continue much longer—during the whole time in which the beast was to reign with the ten kings; for it was only during the latter period that its power to make “fire come down from heaven in the sight of men,” exciting wars whenever it might think fit, respecting the orthodox and heterodox opinions, was limited to the third part of the earth, the sea, &c.

As to the precise period for the commencement of these evils, nothing is said in the text; but we learn, generally, that they point to the introduction of religious disputes, and the consequences to which these would lead. We know from the writings of the Apostles, that the spirit which produces this—the wish of certain professors of Christianity to rule over their brethren, like the kings of the Gentiles, had shown itself even in their day; and we have seen that, though it did not mark it so precisely, the second seal included these religious disputes, as well as the persecutions to which Christ's followers in particular, were to be subjected;—and, therefore, the trumpets may be considered as the commencement of a new prophetic history, in which is given a more ample detail of those circumstances which were only sketched, as it were, in outline, but yet perfect order, by the opening of the former seals.

In corroboration of this, we find that the bloodshed and accompanying judgments proclaimed by this trumpet, are followed by exactly the same consequences as the going out of the Rider who

took peace from the earth, and the Rider with the "yoke." "The third part of the earth was burnt up;" that is, wasted with war and bloodshed;—"and the third part of trees was burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up;"—not only "many" who had "heard the word and received it joyfully, were offended when the sword or fire of persecution" came, and so fell away from the truth;" but throughout all that portion of the world, which in this book is called "a third part," the whole visible profession of Christianity was ultimately withered and blasted;—bishops, "the trees," and their flocks, "the green grass," becoming both equally fruitless, the commandments of God being made void by the traditions, doctrines, and commandments of men.

This defection from the truth began as soon as persecution for the word appeared; it reached its height after "the little horn" (the hierarchy) obtained power from the kings of the earth "to wear out the saints of the Most High." Throughout Europe (the third part of the earth) the truth was cast down to the ground, and the little horn prospered, while the "woman" (the true Church) was obliged to hide herself in the wilderness: those "who clave to her by flatteries," whether distinguished bishops and teachers, or men in less elevated situations, having entirely perverted her institutions, and new-modelled the Church, to make it suit their worldly views; holding this lie in their right hand, that it was possible to "serve God and mammon;"—and making it manifest, by their whole conduct, that they were of the number whom Jude calls "trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit† twice dead, plucked up by the roots, raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars‡ to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever." This singular fact was sealed up in the book of Daniel. It was then only told generally, that a malignant enemy should arise against the kingdom of the Messiah, and that the people of a certain ruling power, which was yet to come, should carry on this warfare: but from no part of Daniel could

* This is the *fire* which the Apostle Paul tells the Corinthians would "try every man's work of what sort it is." They were boasting, some that they had been converted by Paul, some by Apollos, &c., but he informs them, that the Apostles would receive no reward, but for that part of their work which should endure this fire,

† The Greek words import—"Not only bearing no fruit to perfection, but barren—void of vegetable life, and only fit to be rooted up for fuel."

‡ *Bishops*, neither appointed nor ruling by Christ's authority, but "running greedily after the error of Balaam for reward."

it be
shou
shou
jects

T
ticed
usur
as hi
tinue
or, in
posse
sition
whol
the v
finish

" TH
with
blood
had li
viii. 8

We
signifi
tion, s
" peo
that
The s
nation
creatur
power
munic
A mo
mass

* TH
her cir
phical
bolised

the "yoke." "The
rasted with war and
rent up, and all green
ad "heard the word
sword or fire of per-
" but throughout all
lled "a third part,"
ultimately withered
flocks, "the green
commandments of God
d commandments of

persecution for the
the little horn" (the
earth "to wear out
pe (the third part of
, and the little horn
was obliged to hide
her by flatteries,"
men in less elevated
a, and new-modelled
; holding this lie in
od and mammon;"
t, that they were of
withereth, without
g waves of the sea,
o whom is reserved
lar fact was sealed
old generally, that a
om of the Messiah,
which was yet to
part of Daniel could

brinthians would "try
g, some that they had
informs them, that the
eir work which should

ruit to perfection, but
for fuel."
authority, but "running

it be learned, till explained by the Faithful Witness, that those who should thus oppose his rule, though of "impudent countenance," should have the effrontery to maintain that they were his own subjects, and were only seeking to promote his glory!

This wonderful and universal degeneracy, as has been before noticed, came not to its height till Antichrist had received his power, usurped the outer court of the temple of God, and trodden it down as his own property; and we know, from other passages, that it continues till the time appointed for the "cleansing of the sanctuary;" or, in other words, till the period arrives, in which "the saints shall possess the kingdom." Hence it follows, that this trumpet, in opposition to the general interpretation, continues to sound during the whole period of the five succeeding trumpets, down to "the days of the voice of the seventh Angel, when the mystery of God shall be finished."

THE SECOND TRUMPET.

"THE second angel sounded, and as it were a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea; and the third part of the sea became blood; and the third part of the creatures which were in the sea, and had life, died; and the third part of the ships were destroyed," Rev. viii. 8, 9.

We have already seen that, in prophetic language, "a mountain" signifies a kingdom or empire; and "fire," a sword—strife, contention, and war. In the Apocalypse, xvii. 15, "waters" are put for "peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues;" and we know that "the gathering together of waters" is called "seas," Gen. i. 10. The *sea*, then, applied to multitudes, means an assemblage of various nations into one community; and by an obvious analogy, the living creatures in such a *sea*, represent those who are in possession of rule, power, and authority—political life; and *ships* the political intercommunication between the government and its distant dependencies.* *A mountain* is the political fabric of rule and dominion—the *sea* the mass of the people; and as *waters* poured into the sea become a part

* The Egyptians, according to Plutarch, feigned the *moon* to be carried through her circuit in a *ship*, (*Pierius, lib. xlv. c. ix.*) The propriety of this hieroglyphical combination is apparent, when we recollect that with them the *moon* symbolised the *people* of every region.

of it, so strange nations, when poured into a *sea politic*, are melted into the common mass, and can no more be separated.

Such being the different significations of the figures employed in this trumpet, we may be assured that any interpretation which does not embrace them, or only embraces them partially, cannot be the true sense of the prophecy. A great empire, in a state of combustion, consuming and wasting itself with internal war, is here given as a prey to various "peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues;"—the scene of action is filled with bloodshed; the government which formerly existed is destroyed through all its members; and this embraces a portion of the nations and tongues so extensive as to be called "a third part."

As the events which fulfilled this part of the prophecy cannot be comprised within the limits of one Number,* I shall, for convenience, divide the detail into two Sections: the first will enable the reader to form some idea of the intestine fire by which the empire, alluded to in this trumpet, was consumed and wasted; the second, of the consequences which resulted to those by whom the different departments of the government were filled.

SECTION I.—*Of the Great Mountain: the Fire in its bowels, and the Sea into which it was cast.*

We know from the Sealed Book (Daniel), that, after the Grecian, there was to be but one other great empire, within the proper scene of Daniel's visions, namely, that of the descendants of Chittim, Dan. xi. 30, 31. It was also foretold, in the same book, that this empire should be divided into ten kingdoms, but in such a dark manner that the import of the expressions might be considered as in some measure sealed up. This trumpet explains the nature of the events which led to this change in the Roman Empire, by destroying the power of the former rulers.

It may truly be said that those intestine commotions, which at length exhausted and destroyed the strength of the state, to such a degree as to occasion the complete overthrow of the imperial head, had their commencement in the breach of peace which took place between those who had combined against the Lord, and against his

* The portions in which the Author first gave these disquisitions to the public were numbered; and this Trumpet occupies 10 and 11.

politic, are melted
ated.

res employed in this
ion which does not
cannot be the true
state of combustion,
here given as a prey
s, and tongues;"—
government which
embers; and this
extensive as to be

prophecy cannot be
l, for convenience,
nable the reader to
empire, alluded to
second, of the con-
erent departments

n its bowels, and

fter the Grecian,
the proper scene
ants of Chittim,
e book, that this
in such a dark
considered as in
e nature of the
e, by destroying

otions, which at
state, to such a
imperial head,
which took place
and against his

tions to the public

Messiah—the Jews and the Romans. To describe the miseries that were brought upon a very extensive part of the empire by this war, is not here necessary. The particulars may be found in various historical relations. From this time rebellions in the distant provinces became frequent; disputes for the succession taught the army that the sovereignty was at their disposal; emperors were opposed to emperors, and armies to armies. The removal of the seat of empire to Constantinople hastened the fall of Imperial Rome, and the discontents occasioned by this change were heightened by those of religion. "Christianity had long been making progress in the empire. It now ascended the throne of the Cæsars. As the Christians had formerly been persecuted, they, in their turn, became persecutors. . . . Penal statutes were enacted against the ancient worship: the punishment of death was denounced against the sacrifices formerly ordained by law; the altar of *Victory* was overturned; the *Cross* was exalted in its stead, and displayed in place of that triumphant *Eagle* under which the world had been conquered. The most dreadful hates and animosities arose. The Pagans accused the Christians of all their misfortunes, . . . while the Christians affirmed that the remains of Paganism alone had drawn down the wrath of Omnipotence. Both parties were more occupied about their religious disputes than the common safety; and, to complete the miseries of this unhappy people, the Christians became divided among themselves: new sects sprung up: new disputes took place: new jealousies and antipathies raged: and the same punishments were denounced against heretics and pagans. An universal bigotry debased the minds of men. In a grand assembly of the provinces, it was proposed that, as there are three persons in the Trinity, they ought to have three emperors! Sieges were raised, and cities lost, for the sake of a bit of rotten wood or withered bone which was supposed to have belonged to some saint or martyr. The effeminacy of the age mingled itself with this infatuation; and generals, more weak than humane, sat down to mourn the calamities of war, when they should have led their troops to battle."

To give a full detail of these internal feuds, wars, and rebellions, by which the empire was set in a state of combustion, and many barbarous nations invited to share in the common spoil, destroying the power of those who filled the different public offices throughout the empire, would be to transcribe a great part of the Roman history.

* Russel's Modern Europe, Letter 1.

A brief outline, and brief it must necessarily be, considering the length of the period and variety of circumstances to be embraced, may, however, be here useful, save time in our progress, and prevent the necessity of referring the reader to voluminous works, which he may not have at hand when these strictures meet his eye.

In the course of fifty years following the murder of Alexander Severus, (A. D. 235) more than fifty Cæsars are enumerated, who, with that title, either lawful or usurped, made their appearance, to contend for the imperial diadem, were proclaimed, dethroned, and murdered by their own soldiers. Weakened by its dissensions, unwieldy from its magnitude, corrupted and effeminated by the wealth acquired by its conquests, and governed by weak princes,—or rather, having only the semblance of a government, the distant provinces grew turbulent, and panted for emancipation.

In the mean time the Goths, originally inhabitants of Scandinavia, (at present Sweden and Norway,) called by the ancients the “nursery of nations,” began to make eruptions into the empire.—Priscus, believed to be a brother of the emperor Decius, joined these barbarians, and, in attempting to usurp the empire, lost his own life. Decius, led into ambush by his own general Gallus, was killed by the Goths. Gallus, who aspired to the purple, was killed by his own soldiers. Emilian, his rival, fell in the same manner, while marching against another competitor, Valerian. The barbarians on all sides poured upon the provinces, weakened by these civil wars. Valerian’s generals gained some victories over them in Gaul and Illyria; but swarms of Scythians invaded Asia Minor, and took Trebizond, Chalcedon, Nice, and Nicomedia, while the Persians, under Sapor, gained important conquests, and even pillaged Antioch. Valerian, by his own imprudence, fell into the hands of Sapor, by whom he was treated as a slave till his death. He was succeeded by his son Gallienus, whose reign was nothing but a continuation of ravages by the barbarians, and insurrections of the soldiers. When informed that the Egyptians had revolted, he replied with indifference, “Very well, cannot we live without the linen of Egypt?” and being told that Gaul was likewise lost, “Is the Republic lost,” said he, “because we can have no more stuffs of Arras?”—During his reign a crowd of rebels assumed the title of emperors, and occasioned much bloodshed. Trebellius reckons thirty of them; Crevier reduces the number to eighteen. Posthumus, who was one of them, deserves to be distinguished from the rest; he reigned seven years in Gaul, with credit to himself: he

oe, considering the
es to be embraced,
our progress, and
voluminous works,
ures meet his eye.
rder of Alexander
enumerated, who,
their appearance, to
ed, dethroned, and
its dissensions, un-
ated by the wealth
princes,—or rather,
e distant provinces

ts of Scandinavia,
cients the “nursery
pire.—Priscus, bo-
d these barbarians,
n life. Decius, led
ed by the Goths.
his own soldiers.
marching against
n all sides poured

Valerian’s gene-
lyria; but swarms
izond, Chalcedon,
Sapor, gained im-
lerian, by his own
he was treated as
n Gallienus, whose
by the barbarians,
that the Egyptians
well, cannot we
that Gaul was like-
se we can have no
of rebels assumed
shed. Trebellius
mber to eighteen.
distinguished from
dit to himself: he

repulsed the Germans, and, according to custom, was murdered by his soldiers.

Claudius II. retrieved the Roman affairs a little, but he only reigned three years. Under Aurelian, and his successors, Tacitus and Probus, the two latter of whom, as usual, were murdered, the condition of the empire was still farther improved; but the barbarians had found their way into it, and war, almost incessant, was necessary to repel them.

In the year 284, Diocletian came to the throne. The empire being pressed on all sides, he sought an assistant for its defence, and in 286 fixed upon Maximian for his colleague, a Pannonian of obscure birth, ferocious, but a good soldier. The empire still remained *one body*, but it had now *two heads*,—a system which was afterwards productive of the most pernicious effects. In the mean time it had its advantages: Maximian drove out of Gaul these formidable Germans, who were incessantly renewing their incursions; and Diocletian was equally successful against the Persians and barbarous nations in the east: To guard against new dangers, Diocletian resolved to name two Cæsars, who should each command an army, with the right of succession to the empire; and Constantius Chlorus and Galerius were appointed. In 305, Diocletian and his colleague abdicated the empire. They were succeeded by Constantius and Galerius, the former of whom died the following year at York, having previously named his son Constantine his successor to his dominions. This prince was immediately proclaimed by the army, and the Roman empire was again doomed to the horrors of civil war.

Galerius, dreading Constantine, refused him the title of Emperor, which he conferred on Severus. In the mean time the city of Rome proclaimed Maxentius, the son of Maximian, emperor; who, incapable of supporting himself by his own strength, invited his father to resume the sovereignty. Maximian embraced the proposal, after having in vain solicited Diocletian to adopt the same conduct. Severus, betrayed by his army, was in a short time obliged to open his veins. Maximian, dreading Galerius, retired into Gaul, and united Constantine to his interest, by giving him his daughter in marriage. Galerius soon followed. Maxentius seduced part of his troops, but Galerius escaped. Maximian made this a pretext for attempting to depose his own son, but failing, fled from Rome, and again returned to Constantine, whom he tried, but without success, to engage in the war. He then joined Galerius, quarrelled with him soon after, and

again joined Constantine. At length, attempting the life of Constantine, he was forced to strangle himself. Galerius died in the following year, and Maximian and Licinus divided between them the provinces he had possessed.

Maxentius, in the mean time, sought the destruction of Constantine, under pretence of revenging his father's death, while Constantine meditated his ruin, under colour of freeing Rome from the oppression of a tyrant, who was universally execrated. Maxentius had made many enemies, by persecuting the Christians, who were now numerous in the empire. Constantine resolved to turn this to his own benefit, avowed himself a favourer of the Christians, and fixed the monogram of Jesus Christ on the Labarum, which became the principal standard of the Romans. In a short time he passed the Alps, bore down everything before him, and encamped within two miles of Rome. Maxentius at length ventured to give him battle, was defeated and slain. Rome gladly received her deliverer; the senate dedicated temples to him, and Africa even appointed priests to pay divine honours to his family!

After this victory, which happened in the year 312, Constantine, and his colleague, Licinus, immediately secured to the Christians the power of living according to their own laws and institutions; a privilege which was confirmed by an edict drawn up at Milan, in the following year. In the mean time, Maximian, who reigned in Asia, was forming plans for dethroning Licinus and Constantine. Licinus marched against him, who, being defeated, destroyed himself by poison.

The empire had now only two masters, and had some reason to expect a cessation from the intestine wars with which it was wasted, for Licinus was married to Constantine's sister. Consanguinity, however, is no barrier against the encroachments of ambition. In 314, the two princes quarrelled, a battle ensued, and Licinus was defeated. This was followed by a treaty of partition, by which Licinus was obliged to cede to the conqueror, Greece, Macedonia, Pannonia, Dardania, Dacia, all Illyria, and *Mæsia Prima*.

In order to fix the empire in his own family, Constantine gave the title of Cæsar to his three sons, Crispus, Constantine, and Constantius, then infants. Peace continued for a few years, and he had time to apply himself to the affairs of Christianity. To please the enlightened clergy of the age, the Papian Poppæan law against celibacy was repealed, and the privilege of Vestals, to make bequests by will,

before
consec
war h
the em
nature

In 3
defeat
himself
was so

Hav
of soph
Sophist
ecclesi
cuted C

Havi
dered h
put to d
by exec
Several
among c
placard
him as a
curses;
openly t
execrati
new cap
its ruin.

of Const
interests
landhold
their esta
vileges of
habitants.
corn, was

* I ough
made to pa
pp. 30—32
he has the
the influen
passions wh
with the tit

stantine gave the
e, and Constan-
and he had time
ease the enlight-
not celibacy was
quests by will,

Having returned to Rome after a long absence, Constantine rendered himself odious to the citizens, by ordering his son Crispus to be put to death, at the instigation of his step-mother, without trial ; and by executing afterwards, on a bare accusation, the empress herself. Several persons of rank also perished without any known reason, and among others the younger Licinus, a boy of twelve years of age. A placard was affixed to the gates of the emperor's palace, describing him as a second Nero ; every mouth was filled with reproaches and curses ; such was the rage of the populace, that they even dared openly to insult him, and he left Rome in disgust. Behold, in the execrable crimes of Constantine the Great,* the true origin of the new capital of the Roman empire, the building of which accelerated its ruin. Byzantium rose into a magnificent city, received the name of Constantinople, and to its grandeur were sacrificed the strength and interests of the empire. To people it a law was passed, by which the landholders in Asia were deprived of the natural right of disposing of their estates, even by will, unless they had a house in that city. Privileges of every kind, corn, wine, and oil, were lavished on the inhabitants. The Alexandrian fleet, which used to furnish Rome with corn, was destined to supply the new city ; 80,000 measures of wheat

* I ought not to pass over in silence, the many attempts which have been made to palliate the crimes of Constantine.—In a note to his *Assize Sermons*, pp. 30—32, Dr. Valpy has defended his character in a plausible manner. Yet he has the candour to acknowledge some of his faults. "Such was (says he) the influence of Christianity in a prince, who, though he was often a prey to the passions which assailed him, was at his death universally regretted, and dignified with the title of "Restorer" of his country.

were daily distributed among the people; and in a short time the Asiatic fleets were also employed in furnishing the necessary supply. Rome lost many of its principal citizens, its riches, lustre, power, though more than ever necessary, to enable it to withstand the invasion of the barbarians. By an excessive multiplication of dignities, burdensome and infamous imposts were rendered necessary. To crown the folly of this reign, the troops destined for guarding the frontiers were withdrawn and placed in garrison in the cities, a measure which, according to Montesquieu, "produced two evils: the removal of the barrier which restrained so many nations, and the effeminacy of the soldiers, who now frequented the cities and theatres."

Such was the internal fire with which "the great mountain" was wasting and consuming itself at the time of Constantine, "filling the third part of the sea," the nations composing the Roman empire, with desolation and bloodshed. The consequences that might be expected followed. Its fall was accelerated, and it gradually became a prey to the various nations by which it was invaded.

SECTION II.—*Of the evils that resulted from the Great Mountain, burning with fire, being cast into the sea.*

"The third part of the sea became blood; and the third part of the creatures which were in the sea, and had life, died; and the third part of the ships was destroyed."

That the third part of the sea politic, the community of nations, was imbued with blood by those civil wars of which I gave a brief outline in my last, has been sufficiently evinced in the detail. Weakened and paralysed by those bloody feuds, the miseries of the Roman people were aggravated from the period to which I have brought down the history, by the unceasing and increasing incursions of the barbarians, who, from time to time, effected settlements in different provinces, and at length wrested the civil power from the hands of the natives even in the heart of the empire. Those who were possessed of political life, being thus deprived of their power, are said to have "died;" and the "third part of the ships," that is, as has before been shown, the regular political intercommunication among the different and distant parts of the empire was destroyed. This will appear abundantly intelligible from the following detail:—

After the death of Constantine, (An. 337) his three sons, Constantine II., Constantius, and Constans, agreeably to his will, were saluted

emper
were
ambit
to this
latter o
perors,
spectiv
were a
defeate
the we
Magne
purple.
latter, v
was de
ceiving
himself.

Freee
the late
scription
even the
He assu
pride wh
Dreams
conceal
against t
from an
emperor.
and who
sent again
dispersed
send rein
was thus
who ravi
the Rhin
Quadi an
cursions
thing but
councils,
ing, unde
Arians.

in a short time the necessary supply. Riches, lustre, power, withstand the inviolation of dignities, and necessary. To guard the frontier cities, a measure of evils: the removal and the effeminacy of theatres."

"Great Mountain" was Constantine, "filling the Roman empire, with might be expected" became a prey to

Great Mountain, the sea.

and the third part of died; and the third

community of nations, which I gave a brief detail. Weaknesses of the Roman which I have brought incursions of the elements in different from the hands of those who were powerless, are said to be, as has before among the different. This will appear:—

three sons, Constantine, were saluted

emperors. The two brothers of the late emperor, with their sons, were ordered by the new sovereigns to be put to death, lest their ambitious views should excite troubles in the empire! All fell victims to this barbarous order, except two of the youths, Gallus and Julian, the latter of whom rose afterwards to the imperial dignity. Two of the emperors, as might be expected, soon disagreed about the extent of their respective territories. Constantine, to whom Britain, Gaul, and Spain, were allotted, wished to obtain a part of Italy—war followed; he was defeated and slain, (anno 340) and Constantine remained sole master of the west till the year 350, when he was assassinated by order of Magnentius, one of his commanders, who revolted and assumed the purple.—A war followed between Constantius and Magnentius; the latter, who was an object of hatred in Rome, took refuge in Gaul, was defeated in Dauphine, by the emperor's generals, and perceiving that his soldiers were resolved to deliver him up, destroyed himself.

Freed from this enemy, Constantius, under pretence of destroying the late usurper's party, established a system of *espionage* and proscription, that became more intolerable, and struck more terror than even the invasions of the Franks, Alemains, and other barbarians. He assumed the titles "Master of the World" and "Eternal,"—a pride which was accompanied with all the refinements of tyranny. Dreams were made capital crimes, and virtuous men were obliged to conceal themselves. His general, Sylvanus, who had protected Gaul against the barbarians, accused by calumny, and dreading everything from an ungrateful, perfidious court, caused himself to be proclaimed emperor. Ursinicus, who had equally signalized himself in the east, and who had been treated with similar ingratitude by the court, was sent against him. Sylvanus was slain, and his troops immediately dispersed:—but the emperor chose rather to lose that province than send reinforcements to the general, whose merit gave umbrage. Gaul was thus abandoned as a prey to the Franks, Alemains, and Saxons, who ravaged the country, after destroying 45 towns on the banks of the Rhine. Pannonia and Upper Mæsia were laid waste by the Quadi and Sarmatians, and the east was afflicted with dreadful incursions of the Persians, while Constantius, inattentive to every thing but the squabbles of theologians, spent his time in assembling councils, persecuting the defenders of *Consubstantiality*, and fomenting, under pretence of settling, disputes between the Catholics and Arians.

Surrounded with difficulties, produced by his own perverse stupidity, he at length bestowed the dignity of Cæsar on Julian, his own cousin-german, and brother of Gallus, who was made governor of Gaul, where he behaved with singular prudence and political address. He quickly drove out the invaders, and even pursued them to the other side of the Rhine. He soon became the object of the emperor's envy. The flower of his army was ordered to Constantinople, and Gaul was again on the point of being lost; but the soldiers, when he gave them orders to march, refused to obey, proclaimed him emperor, and forced him to accept the diadem—to which he had perhaps less real reluctance than he affected. Julian was fortunate. Constantius died in Cilicia, on his way to oppose him, and he obtained peaceable possession of the throne in the year 361.

He was an enemy to Christianity, but it may be asserted with truth, that to real Christianity he did much less injury than his foolish predecessor, or even Constantine, the idol of bigotry. He is charged with "encouraging the sectaries and schismatics, who brought dishonour upon the Gospel by their divisions;"* but this only proves that he would not, like his pious predecessor, allow them to persecute each other. Even his enemies allow that he "affected to appear moderate in religious matters, unwilling to trouble any on account of their faith, or to appear averse to any sect or party."† But why call this affectation, if his actions did not belie the character? But "by art and stratagem he undermined the church, removing the privileges that were granted to Christians and their spiritual rulers;"‡ or, as another historian§ states it, "he revoked the privileges of the Clerks, abolished the distributions established by Constantine for their benefit, and that of widows and virgins, obliged the Christians to rebuild the temples at their own expense, and excluded them from all employments." But Christians have no real cause of complaint in being obliged to provide for the expenses of their public worship: the temples, which they were compelled to rebuild, they had themselves overthrown, in violation of the public peace; and, as to exclusion from employments, it is still common, in some countries, to exclude Dissenters from offices of trust.¶ His reign, however, was but short.

* Moshier.

† Millot.

‡ This is not to be considered as a complaint. Although it is incumbent on Christians to be subject to the civil powers under which they live, and to obey them in everything which interferes not with the commands of Christ, in as far as the concerns of his kingdom, "which is not of this world," prevail with them.

In 3
ceede
provin
grand
other
ment

Jov
Valen
barbar
poures
Sarma
tories
the Pe
the tw
west t
Valen
and m
Roman
wretch
he pu
Gratian
Second

Vale
He obt
the em
was no
the Hu
Jordan

Acco
authors
they w
many c
a coun
west to
from no
which v

they will
use it re
how coul
of honour

own perverse stupidity on Julian, his own made governor of and political address. pursued them to the object of the empire to Constantinople, the soldiers, when proclaimed him emperor which he had perceived him to be fortunate. see him, and he observed near 361.

may be asserted with more authority than his foolish vanity. He is charged with, who brought disaster, but this only proves that they are inclined to persecute those who are affected to appear pious on any account of expediency. But why call him a hypocrite? But "by enjoying the privileges of secular rulers;" or, as the charges of the Clerks, are made for their benefit, Christians to rebuild the empire from all employment, complaint in being a public worship: the emperor had themselves, and, as to exclusion of countries, to exclude the emperor, was but short.

not.
though it is incumbent on them to live, and to obey the commands of Christ, in as far as they can, they shall prevail with them

In 363, he lost his life in a war with the Persians, and was succeeded by Jovian, who terminated the war by giving up to Sapor five provinces on the Tigris, which had formerly belonged to his great-grandfather, with immediate possession of Nisibis, Singara, and some other places in Mesopotamia. This was the first actual dismemberment of the empire.

Jovian died soon after (in 364), and the army gave the purple to Valentinian, who named his brother Valens as his colleague. The barbarians having no longer a Julian to contend with, the Alemanni poured into Gaul and Rætia, (Tyrol, Trent, &c.,) the Quadi and Sarmatians into Pannonia, the Picts and Scots into the Roman territories in Britain, the Goths into Thrace, the Moors into Africa, and the Persians into Armenia. To make head against so many enemies, the two emperors divided their dominions. Valentinian reserved the west to himself: Valens had the east, *i.e.*, Egypt, Asia, and Thrace—Valentinian drove out the invaders, but he had recourse to assassins, and means which load his name with infamy; and from this time the Romans became every day more barbarous and abandoned. This wretch had two favourite bears fed with the carcases of those whom he put to death. He died in 379, and was succeeded by his son Gratian, with whom the army associated his brother Valentinian the Second.

Valens still reigned in the east, deservedly hated by all his subjects. He obtained some slight advantages over the Persians; but all that the empire had hitherto suffered from them, or from its other invaders, was nothing compared to the evils that were now to be inflicted by the Huns, a nation which struck such terror, that the historian Jordannes derives its origin from the commerce of devils with witches.

According to accounts extracted by De Guignes from Chinese authors, the Huns, a people entirely unknown in Europe, where they were one day to commit such devastations, were known in China many centuries before the Christian era. They were inhabitants of a country on the north of that empire, extending 500 leagues from west to east, where they bordered on the Mantchew Tartars, and 300 from north to south, reaching to Tibet and the Great Wall of China, which was built to defend that empire against their lawless incursions.

they will, if they can be free and disentangled from the concerns of this world, use it rather. Considering the humility taught and exemplified by Jesus, how could it be viewed as consistent in his disciples to be solicitous about offices of honour and authority in the kingdoms or societies of this world?

In a word, they were the most formidable people Tartary ever produced. Civil wars having broke out among them, the northern Huns were vanquished, and retired westward. Several hordes united near Siberia, but being driven from their possessions by new tribes pouring into western Tartary, they went southward, passed the Wolga, and attacked the Alans, who dwelt upon the coasts of the Sea of Asoph, a roving nation like themselves, but less savage, yet such barbarians that they fled their slain enemies, and with their skins made housings for their horses. The Alans fled, some to the east, others to the west, of the Don, and a third party towards the Danube. The Huns, though thus left to occupy the vast country between the Wolga and the Don, soon set out again in quest of new habitations, crossed the Don, massacred the Alans and other barbarous nations, or forced them to join their standards; drove the Ostrogoths from the Dnieper, and then from the Niester, and at last attacked the Visigoths, whom they forced to retire across the Danube. In short, these nations precipitated themselves upon one another with irresistible weight, bearing down every thing before them.

The Goths, who now occupied the countries from the Danube to the Baltic, struck with a panic, and looking on the Huns as cannibals, thought of nothing but how they might find an asylum from their fury. With this view, about 200,000 of the Visigoths presented themselves on the banks of the Danube, entreating the Romans to grant them a passage and receive them as subjects who would shed the last drop of their blood in defence of the empire. Valens, delighted with the acquisition of a nation of soldiers, "granted them a settlement in Thrace." The Ostrogoths next appeared, requesting the same indulgence. Valens began now to fear the consequences that might result from the admission of such dangerous guests, and rejected their demand; but his troops having quitted the Danube to escort the former emigrants to Thrace, there was no force to oppose their entrance.

Thus was the barrier thrown down between the Romans and that people by whom they had been so long menaced. The Romans, instead of acting in a conciliatory manner to their new guests, excited them to fury by ill usage, and drove them to arms. They overspread Thrace like a deluge, filled it with blood and desolation; and then invited the Huns and Alans, who had driven them from their former possessions, to increase their army and share in the spoils. Valens patched up a peace with the Persians, that he might turn his arms

again
envir
Crati
to his
nours
at Ad
Ha
have
in an
were
the R
He
which
joined
and P
encou
indeed
flocks
Cra
Conat
confer
of Illy
wasted
admitti
number
serve in
astical
private
force ap
assemb
true or
overthre
power t
Alans a
court a
now rea
sensions
Maxi
disconte
the north

Tartary ever pro-
the northern Huns
hordes united near
new tribes pouring
the Wolga, and
Sea of Asoph, a
such barbarians
ins made housings
others to the west,
be. The Huns,
n the Wolga and
ions, crossed the
nations, or forced
from the Dnieper,
Visigoths, whom
these nations pre-
le weight, bearing

m the Danube to
e Huns as cannib-
asylum from their
sigoths presented
g the Romans to
who would shed
re. Valens, de-
granted them a
eared, requesting
he consequences
erous guests, and
the Danube to
o force to oppose

Romans and that
The Romans, in-
v guests, excited
They overspread
ation; and then
from their former
spoils. Valens
urn his arms

against this formidable enemy. He arrived at Constantinople, the environs of which were already invested with the barbarians, and Cratian, who had defeated the Alemains in the west, was hastening to his aid; but, fearful his colleague might share with him in the honours of a victory, Valens precipitated a battle with the barbarians at Adrianople, in which he lost his life.

Had the Goths understood the art of besieging towns, they must have become masters of all Thrace; but, though ready to face death in any shape, in which the arm of an enemy could inflict it, they were panic struck when they found large stones hurled upon them by the Roman engines, from the walls of Adrianople.

Hence, leaving Adrianople, Perinthus, and Constantinople, all of which they had attacked, they ranged a wide extent of country, and, joined by other barbarians, carried havoc into Achaia on one hand, and Pannonia on the other. So feeble was the resistance which they encountered, that their leader, Fritigern, remarked, that the Romans indeed possessed the country, but only by the same title by which flocks possess the lands where they pasture.

Cratian, finding affairs in such a perilous state when he reached Constantinople, admitted Theodosius to a share in the sovereignty, conferring on him the empire of the east, with a considerable portion of Illyria, Dacia, Mœsia, and all Greece, countries which were then wasted by the barbarians. Theodosius adopted the strange policy of admitting the barbarians among the number of his troops, immense numbers of whom, from the north of the Danube, were allowed to serve in his armies. This Theodosius, called the Great by ecclesiastical writers, prohibited the heterodox from holding meetings even in private houses; in case of transgression, permitted the orthodox to use force against them; declared certain heretics worthy of death; and assembled successively a number of councils to fix the standards of true orthodoxy. Cratian, equally zealous, persecuted the Pagans, overthrew the altar of Victory in the senate, and did everything in his power to make the Pagans his enemies, lavishing his favours on the Alans and other barbarians, whom he preferred to all offices in the court and army, even wearing their dress. Such were the means now resorted to, by the eastern and western emperors, to heal the dissensions that prevailed!

Maximus, governor of Britain, resolving to profit by the present discontents, was proclaimed emperor by the troops under him, crossed the northern part of Gaul, and was met by Cratian's army near Paris.

Cratian, abandoned by his troops, fled towards the Alps in disguise, but was at length betrayed and murdered in 383. An accommodation between Maximus and Valentinian II. followed soon after, by which the former was allowed to retain Gaul, Spain, and Britain, his title being acknowledged even by Theodosius. Priscillian, a Spanish bishop, accused of heresy by a council held at Bourdeaux, appealed to the emperor, and, with his disciples, was carried before Maximus, who, at the instigation of two zealots, ordered them all to be put to death—a proof how well he was qualified for government. He soon after threatened Valentinian with a war if he should continue to favour Arianism—a mere pretext for attempting to seize on his dominions. The young emperor fled to Theodosius, who, armed in his cause, took a number of barbarians into the pay, and in Pannonia gained two victories over the usurper, who had passed the Alps to meet him. Maximus was pursued, taken prisoner, and put to death. The Pagans had declared for the usurper, in the hope that he would re-establish polytheism. The Christians opposed him chiefly because he had been just enough to order the rebuilding of a Jewish synagogue which the populace of Rome had burnt.

Religious tumults were now become frequent;—nor could it be otherwise, considering the examples of false zeal that were daily set before the rabble by emperors and bishops, but particularly the latter. At Calinicum a synagogue was destroyed by the Christians, and a church belonging to some reputed heretics by the monks. Theodosius ordered them, as in justice he ought, to be rebuilt. The pious Ambrose wrote to the prince, that “the Christians would be prevaricators, if they obeyed him, or martyrs, if they chose rather to obey God.” Emboldened by impunity, these pious men destroyed so many synagogues, that Theodosius was at last obliged to order such disturbers of the public peace to be severely punished; declaring that the sect of the Jews, not being proscribed by law, ought to have the free exercise of their religion throughout the empire. Against the proscribed sects he was extremely zealous. He established inquisitors for the discovery of heretics, drove the Manicheans from Rome as infamous persons, and, on their death, ordered their goods to be distributed among the people. The excesses to which such absurd laws gave birth, cannot be described; for every one imagining that he had a right to murder the proscribed, all were Manicheans whom others wished to destroy, till at length he was obliged to prohibit it under pain of death. The governor of Thessalonica and several persons having

been m
a gener
line bet
circus t
without
ing to s

In th
one of
Eugeniu
followin
Arcadiu
western
exceptio
and eun
Imperial

From
how “t
barbarian
speedily
persevera
more vir
gave the
the scan
the sycop
which ca
Such war
in the di
intercomm
tion of aid
some of th
and many
“the thir
surprise
soon after
was assail

The fir
to arise af
which the
proclaimed
of view, b

Alps in disguise,
An accommoda-
ed soon after, by
n, and Britain, his
scillian, a Spanish
eaux, appealed to
before Maximus,
n all to be put to
nment. He soon
continue to favour
n his dominions.
in his cause, took
onia gained two
ps to meet him.
th. The Pagans
ould re-establish
cause he had been
gogue which the

-nor could it be
at were daily set
cularly the latter.
Christians, and a
nks. Theodosius
ilt. The pious
ould be prevari-
e rather to obey
estroyed so many
order such dis-
; declaring that
ught to have the
e. Against the
ished inquisitors
from Rome as
goods to be dis-
uch absurd laws
ing that he had a
s whom others
bit it under pain
persons having

been murdered in a sedition in that city, this monster privately ordered a general massacre of the inhabitants, without an attempt to draw a line between the guilty and innocent. They were assembled in the circus under pretence of an exhibition of games, and were butchered, without distinction of age or sex, to the number of 7000, or, according to some historians, more than double that number.

In the year 392, Valentinian was assassinated by the instigation of one of his own generals, who put Eugenius in his place. In 394, Eugenius was defeated and put to death by Theodosius, who died the following year, after having divided the empire between his two sons Arcadius and Honorius—the eastern part to the former, and the western to the latter. From this time the emperors, with very few exceptions, were mere instruments in the hands of ministers, women, and eunuchs, and it might easily have been foreseen that the sun of Imperial splendour was hastening to set.

From the foregoing epitome, the reader can be at no loss to discover how “the creatures that were in the sea, and had life, died.” The barbarians having once gained a settlement among the natives, very speedily gained an ascendancy by their greater courage, fortitude, and perseverance. They were better men, better soldiers, more assiduous, more virtuous, than the enervated, dissipated, frivolous people, who gave them the name of barbarians. Is it a wonder, then, that in the scramble for the spoils of this mighty empire, they should expel the sycophants who possessed none of those qualifications for office, which can alone command preference in times of general tumult? Such was the state of things in the very bosom of the empire; while in the distant provinces the yoke was entirely thrown off, and the intercommunication by which the distant members yielded their portion of aid and supply to the general system was entirely destroyed—some of the provinces being usurped by the commanders of the army, and many more of them subjugated by the foreign invaders. Thus “the third part of the ships were destroyed.” Nor can it excite surprise that “the great mountain thus burning with fire,” should soon after become a prey to the different warlike nations by which it was assailed.

The first trumpet proclaimed the religious contentions which were to arise after the first preaching of the Gospel, and the dismal effects which these would produce, in a spiritual point of view. The second proclaimed the evil they would ultimately produce in a political point of view, by wasting the strength of the empire in such a manner,

that at last, it should not be able to resist, with any effect, the attacks of the various nations which would come against it. The grand catastrophe need not now be detailed, as it forms the subject of the fourth trumpet, the narrative of the prophecy, so far as it regards this political catastrophe, being suspended to announce certain important changes that were to take place in the church during the same period of time. The nature of these changes, which were followed by most lamentable effects, are declared by the sounding of the third trumpet, which comes next to be considered.

THE THIRD TRUMPET.

"THE third angel sounded, and there fell a great star from heaven, burning, as it were a lamp, and it fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters; and the name of the star is called Wormwood: and the third part of the waters became wormwood, and many men died of the waters because they were made bitter," Rev. viii. 10, 11.

In treating of this trumpet, though I shall be as brief as I can consistently with perspicuity, I shall be under the necessity of taking up more of the reader's time than I could wish; but it is humbly hoped that the importance of the subject will compensate for the trouble of the perusal. There is not, perhaps, in the whole book of Revelation, a single passage that has been more generally misunderstood and misapplied than this *third trumpet*; and yet, trivial as it may appear to some persons, there is not, in the whole book, a single passage, the right understanding of which is more necessary to the elucidation of the other parts of the prophecy. As the exposition will necessarily occupy this and several of the succeeding Numbers, I shall divide what I have to offer into Sections.

PART I.

SECTION I.—*Of the figures employed, and the general import of the expressions, in this trumpet. They relate to the church—meaning of the word church.*

Stars, as we have seen, signify rulers in the world; and, in the first chapter of this book, we are told that they signify the same in the

church-
the seve
Wate
The sam
with th
holized
and for
streams
which i
merely p
newness
are consi
the figure
increase
sanctuary
possessing
filled with
growing o
away, bri
medicine.
first, "the
that does
river to
chapter of
een in its
have been
His Anoin
As the v
ent the ch
ne service
wormwood,
ere warn
uterness sh
defiled," He
informed th
to the wat
ed of them
the same
iritual dea
ished, and

any effect, the attacks
against it. The grand
subject of the
far as it regards this
certain important
the same period
followed by most
of the third trumpet,

star from heaven,
and part of the rivers,
of the star is called
became wormwood,
were made bitter,"

brief as I can con-
cessity of taking up
it is humbly hoped
for the trouble of
book of Revelation.
misunderstood and
al as it may appear
a single passage,
y to the elucidation
ion will necessarily
ers, I shall divide

eral import of the
church—meaning

world; and, in the
the same in the

church—"The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven candlesticks are the seven churches."

Waters, we have also seen, represent the nations of the world. The same figure is likewise employed to represent the church, but with this difference—the world, which is the larger mass, is symbolized by *waters* and *seas*, but the church by *rivers* and *fountains*; and for an obvious reason—in the figurative language of the east, the streams of rivers and fountains are *living water*, in opposition to that which is *stagnant* or *dead*; and, in the Scriptures, Christians (not merely pretenders to the name) are represented "as quickened to newness of life," in contradistinction to the men of the world, who are considered as being "dead in trespasses and sins." Agreeably to the figure here used, the Prophet Ezekiel, chap. xlviii., predicting the increase of the church, compares it to "waters issuing out of the sanctuary (*running water*)—a river that could not be passed over," possessing such a vivifying influence as to give life wherever it flows—filled with a great multitude of fishes, having all trees fit for food growing on its banks, whose leaf should not fade, nor their food waste away, bringing forth fruit every month for meat, and leaves for medicine. But this river came not at once to this magnitude: at first, "the waters were only to the ankles; then to the knees; after that deep enough to reach the loins; and lastly, waters to swim in, a river that could not be passed over." And we learn from the 22d chapter of the Revelation, that this *river of living water* will not be seen in its plenitude till after the *Seven Vials* of the wrath of God have been poured out on those who have opposed the sovereignty of His Anointed.

As the *vegetable kingdom* is likewise employed as a figure to represent the church (*See the first Trumpet*), those who turn away from the service of God are represented as *roots* which bear *gall and wormwood*, in place of good fruit, Deut. xxix. 18. Christian churches were warned by the Apostles to "look diligently lest this root of bitterness should spring up to trouble them, and thereby many be defiled," Heb. xii. 15; but by the sounding of this trumpet we are informed that, in spite of this warning, this wormwood was admitted into the waters, and poisoned them to such a degree that "many men died of them because of their bitterness." The death here spoken of the same that was indicated by the rider on the "pale horse;"—spiritual death!—death followed by hell!—but there the victims perished, and here they are *poisoned*:—this leads to a farther inquiry

respecting the meaning of *rivers* and *fountains*, as distinguished from *collections of waters* and *seas*.

The latter, as we have seen, represent kingdoms or empires composed of various nations united under one political head. But the streams of rivers or of fountains are individually distinct, and, in the very nature of things, independent of each other; and, if we attend to the writings of the Apostles, we shall find that such, in fact, was the case with regard to the churches which were *planted* and *put in order* under their own eyes. The saints in every individual town or city, formed the church at that particular place, as the Church at Jerusalem, at Antioch, at Cesarea, at Cenchrea, and at Corinth, Acts viii. 1, xiii. 1, xviii. 22; Rom. xvi. 1; 1 Cor. i. 2; nor are different assemblies in any country or province ever mentioned as united under one head or jurisdiction, or as constituting one church, except where Christ himself is spoken of as the head; on the contrary, like the streams and rivers of any country, they are always mentioned in the plural number; for instance, the churches of Macedonia, of Judea, of Galatia, Acts ix. 31, xvi. 1; 2 Cor. viii. 1; Gal. i. 22; 1 Thess. ii. 14; 1 Cor. xvi. 1; and in this book of the Revelation, the *seven* churches in Asia, not *the* church of Asia, of Judea, &c. This is a circumstance which deserves more attention than a superficial reader may at first view imagine; for, singular as it may appear to many, the changing the original signification of the word, which, in our English version of the New Testament is translated *church*, was one of the principal means by which the fountains and rivers were poisoned;—or, to drop the figurative expression, it was this that destroyed the purity of the primitive churches in their order, doctrine, and discipline, and at length absorbed them so completely in the communities of the nations, that they became one with them, and ceased to be the churches of Jesus Christ.

It is as common now, as it ever was in any age, to say, “If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets,” Mat. xxiii. 30; and of any crime with which men stand charged in the Scriptures. Does the poisoning here spoken of still exist? Can any thing like be found even in our own country? A brief examination of some particulars connected with this question, appears to me the shortest and simplest way of making the origin of the evil pointed out by the trumpet perfectly obvious.

The Greek word *ecclesia* signifies *assembly* or *congregation*, and

for re-
leged,
by lon-
know
retain
for th
emph
Seven
fact in
versio
words
4th. V
hath
agree
Can
plain
addre
have
whole
tamen
presen
the tu
the hi
tarehu
the ec
they v
the pe
a com
inquir
eccles
church
times
place
it chu
presen
out, re
princip
actual

distinguished from

or empires com-
al head. But the
ect, and, in the very
f we attend to the
fact, was the case
and *put in order*
dual town or city,
church at Jerusalem,
rinth, Acts viii. 1,
nor are different
ed as united under
arch, except where
contrary, like the
mentioned in the
edonia, of Judea, of
2; 1 Thess. ii. 14;
the *seven churches*

This is a circum-
erficial reader may
pear to many, the
ich, in our English
ch, was one of the
were poisoned;—
s that destroyed the
doctrine, and discer-
n the communities
and ceased to be the

ge, to say, "If we
have been partaken
xxiii. 30; and
in the Scriptures
can any thing like
ination of some pa-
me the shortest at-
pointed out by the

congregation, at

for rendering it *church* no honest reason can be assigned. It is al-
leged, indeed, that though the word *church* is not English, yet having
by long usage become familiar to our language, and its meaning well
known, the translators of our English version acted very properly in
retaining it. But they must have had other reasons for their conduct,
for throughout the whole of the Old Testament they have not once
employed the word *church*, though the Hebrew word which the
Seventy render *ecclesia*, occurs very frequently in the original. The
fact is simply this: among the rules prescribed by King James for the
version still used were the following: "3d. The old *ecclesiastical*
words to be kept as the word *church*, not to be translated *congregation*.
4th. When any word has divers significations, that to be kept which
hath been most commonly used by the most eminent fathers, being
agreeable to the propriety of the place, and the analogie of faith."*
Can the source and object of such directions be mistaken? It is
plain they were perfectly understood by those to whom they were
addressed; for they followed not their letter but their spirit, and hence
have never hesitated to use the word *congregation* throughout the
whole of the Old Testament. Nor is this all: even in the New Tes-
tament they have, in one place, most officiously deviated from the rule
prescribed to them. In the Acts of the Apostles, ch. xix., where
the tumult excited by Demetrius and his fellow-craftsmen is related,
the historian informs us that, when they had dragged Gaius and Ari-
starchus into the theatre, "some cried one thing, some another, for
the *ecclesia* was confused, and the greater part knew not wherefore
they were come together;" that when the town-clerk had appeased
the people, he said, "If Demetrius and the craftsmen with him have
a complaint against any man, the law is open, but if ye
inquire concerning other matters, it shall be determined in a lawful
ecclesia;" and that "when he had thus spoken, he dismissed the
church." Now, why, in this passage, have they no less than three
times translated *ecclesia* by the word *assembly*, while in every other
place in which it occurs in the New Testament, they have rendered
it *church*?—In their translation of this narrative, another circumstance
presents itself, which, taken along with what has just been pointed
out, renders their conduct difficult to be accounted for on any other
principle than that they were influenced by the same spirit which
actuated the craftsmen to cry up Diana of the Ephesians. They

* Fuller's Church History, Book X. p. 46.

make the town clerk to say, "Ye have brought hither these men, which are neither robbers of churches, nor yet blasphemers of your goddess." From such a version, one would certainly expect to find in the original either *ecclesia*, or some of its derivatives or compounds, but no such word presents itself. Can we doubt the motive, then, that induced them to change *temple robber* (*hierosylos*) into *church robber*?

It is impossible to find language to express, in terms of sufficient reprobation, the detestable nature of the means that have been employed to involve and retain the world in darkness. What has just been stated is only a small sample of the "policy by which the king of impudent countenance, and versed in dark sayings, has caused craft to prosper, Dan. viii. 23, 25; for these were but novices at the trade, compared with the "great shining star" that took the lead in this impious traffic; but we are ever so ready to shift all reproof from ourselves, that I thought it might be useful to give here an instance of the degree of proficiency to which some among us have attained, in extracting the essence of *wormwood*; for, in proportion as men are led to see the artifices that have been employed to deceive them, will they be anxious to discover the nature and origin of the means that have been employed to obscure the truth.

On the first propagation of Christianity in the world, those who embraced the truth in any place were joined together in fellowship to observe the ordinances of Christ. The first congregations were formed by the Apostles themselves, in Judea, and others were soon after established among the heathen converts. These were not left to frame an order of government and discipline according to their own notions; every thing among them, on the contrary, was established according to the model of the Christian assemblies, which "in Judea were in Christ Jesus;" and which had received their order from the Apostles themselves. This was the evidence given by them that "they had received the word preached by the Apostles, not as the word of men, but (as it is in truth) the word of God," 1 Thes. ii. 13, 14. Nor can any other evidence be given by us of the sincerity of our profession of Christianity; for "he that heareth the Apostles heareth Christ; and he that despiseth their authority, despiseth that of Christ," Luke x. 16, who sent them to "disciple all nations,

* A translation of the Bible, in use before the present one, gives the town clerk's words thus: "These men, which have neither committed sacrilege, neither do blaspheme your goddess."

teach
Mat.
Th
assem
lists.
is the
life th
to ma
alive
filmen
in wh
then to
&c.;
organ
expres
enjoin
and co
faith a
of the
memb
furnish
part of
well kn
would
2 Pet.
bishops
what th
come v
doctrine
tickle th
3. Thi
the con
To unde
disciplin
ment of
purity.
these as
mitted t

* Some
ing somet

teaching them to observe all things whatsoever He had commanded," Mat. xxviii. 20.

The doctrines, order, and discipline, to be maintained in Christian assemblies, are detailed in the writings of the Apostles and Evangelists. The "Gospels were written that men might believe that *Jesus* is the *Messiah*, the *Son of God*, and that believing they might have life through his name," John xx. 31: the "Acts of the Apostles," to make known to us those infallible proofs by which he was shown alive after his passion; the manner of his ascension, ch. i.; the fulfilment of his promise in sending the "Holy Ghost," ch. ii.; the way in which the Gospel was preached, first to the Jews, ch. ii.—viii., then to the Samaritans, viii., and, lastly, to the Gentiles, viii., x., xiii., &c.; and to inform us how the first churches were established and organised by the Apostles: and the "Epistles" were written for the express purpose of correcting practices and doctrines contrary to those enjoined by the Apostles, and to instruct the Christian congregations, and consequently all their members, in every thing that regarded their faith and practice, as bodies and as individuals, "that after the decease of the Apostles they might be able to have these things always in remembrance," 2 Pet. i. 15; "being thereby perfectly and thoroughly furnished unto every good work," 2 Tim. iii. 17. This care on the part of those who first preached the gospel was necessary; for they well knew, that "*false teachers* were to arise up after them, who would bring in damnable heresies," and convert religion into a trade, 2 Pet. ii. 1—3; that "*grievous wolves*" were to enter among the bishops, who would not spare the flock, but speak things contrary to what the Apostles had enjoined, Acts xx. 29; and that a time would come when those professing Christianity would "not endure sound doctrine; but, after their own desires, have a crowd of teachers to tickle their ears, being turned from the truth unto fables," 2 Tim. iv. 3. This corruption, the manner in which it reached its height, and the consequences that followed, are the subjects of the third trumpet. To understand it, we must examine a little what was the order and discipline established by the founder of our religion for the government of the assemblies collected in his name, and for preserving their purity. For this end it will be necessary that we ascertain, of whom these assemblies were composed, and how the members were admitted to fellowship: what office-bearers* were instituted among

* Some object to calling the *servants* of the church *office-bearers*, as conveying something of the authority and lordship of the great ones of this world; but

them by the Apostles, and their duties—the manner in which their public meetings were conducted—their discipline, and the end intended to be gained:—Of these in my next.

SECTION II.—*Of whom the primitive Christian assemblies were composed, and how the members were admitted into fellowship.*

The very circumstance of salvation proclaimed through a crucified Saviour, implies that mankind have departed from God, and merited his wrath; for to talk of restoring a man to health who has no malady, of giving sight to him who already sees, of redeeming one who is not a captive, but a free man, would not be less absurd than “to call the righteous to repentance.” The Scriptures of truth have declared, that “there is none righteous—no, not one; there is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God.” “All the world is guilty before him,” Rom. iii. The same Scriptures declare also “glad tidings”—that the Messiah, promised by Jehovah, “to finish transgression, make an end of sin, and bring in everlasting righteousness,” Dan. ix. 24, came into the world at the time appointed, “abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light,” 2 Tim. i. 10; “that Christ died for our sins, that he was buried, and that he rose again, the third day, according to the Scriptures,” 1 Cor. xv. 1—3; and that “men are saved by receiving or crediting this good news, and keeping it in memory;” for the word of faith preached by the Apostles was very simple: “The word is nigh thee, in thy mouth and in thy heart; *if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved,*” Rom. x. 8, 9.

These good tidings the Apostles proclaimed to men, guilty and vile, as they found them; and those who gladly received them were, on confessing the Lord Jesus with their mouth, immediately baptised and added to the church, without any previous qualification whatever, or any other proof of the sincerity of their conversion either required or expected. That the profession of faith required from the converts was short and simple, is proved by the case of the Eunuch, Acts viii. When Philip joined him, he was reading in Isaiah this passage, “He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearers, so opened he not his mouth.” Philip began at the same

it will be seen that this writer, though he uses this term, is very far from encouraging any lordship among the disciples of Jesus.

Scripture
their w
der me
thine he
Christ i
not a sin
the faith
preachin
Apostles
audience
slain tha
Messiah
the word
added ab
stedfastl
bread, an
they were
at Jerusa
be proper
same man
33; and
the sincer
manded b
from even

SECTION

Having
were comp
it is necess
or, in other
their purity
by him wh
knowledge
consisted, v
impregnate
tive charac
water,” opp
No societ

Scripture, and "preached unto him Jesus." And, as they went on their way, "See, here is water," said the Eunuch, "what doth hinder me to be baptised?" Philip replied, "If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest;" and he answered, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God;" and Philip baptised him. That this was not a singular instance of a convert instantly baptised on professing the faith, but the general and common practice, is plain from the preaching of Peter, recorded in the second chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, and the consequences that followed. He charges his audience with "having taken, and, by wicked hands, crucified and slain that same Jesus whom God hath constituted both Lord and Messiah;" and yet we are informed, that those who gladly received the word of salvation were baptised, and "the same day there were added about three thousand souls" to the number that "continued stedfastly in the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers;"—that is, on professing their faith in Jesus, they were baptised, and by that act admitted members of the church at Jerusalem.—To enumerate instances is not necessary, only it may be proper to add, that both men and women were admitted in the same manner, Acts viii. 12, and also their households, Acts xvi. 15, 33; and when admitted, they were taught and required to manifest the sincerity of their profession "by observing all the things commanded by him who died, the just for the unjust; and by abstaining from even the appearance of evil."

SECTION III.—*Of Government—Of the Office-Bearers in the Church; and first, of Bishops or Presbyters.*

Having ascertained of whom the primitive Christian congregations were composed, and how the members were admitted into fellowship, it is necessary that we should understand how they were governed; or, in other words, what laws were instituted for preserving them in their purity, and insuring a due observance of *all things* commanded by him who is "the head of his body, the church;" for, without a knowledge of this, we shall never understand in what that defection consisted, which made them become like filthy "stagnant water," impregnated with "gall and wormwood," when they lost their primitive character, compared in this trumpet to "rivers and fountains of water," opposed to that which is dead and stagnant.

No society whatever can exist without some kind of government,

nor can any government be administered without office-bearers. That nothing might be wanting for the maintenance of the most perfect order in the kingdom of the Messiah, a regular code of laws was given by him to his subjects, *every one of whom* was appointed guardian of these laws; and regular office-bearers were instituted for their better maintenance, and to see them duly executed. Indeed, the appointment of these office-bearers, and the duties to be observed by them, are a part of the laws; and without them the body becomes defective in its organization.

In every state, the enacting of laws belongs to the law-giver. Every subject is bound to obey them. Neglect, or a breach of the laws on the part of the subject, renders him liable to the penalties denounced by them. And he who takes upon him to set aside any of the laws, or to enact new ones by his own authority, usurps the place of the Sovereign—that is, he becomes a rebel.

It will not be denied by any person who calls himself a Christian, that the Messiah remains eternally the supreme head of his church, and that the laws of his kingdom are declared in the New Testament. There we find *bishops* and *deacons* spoken of as office-bearers in the churches of Christ. How were they appointed? What were the duties enjoined them? Were any other offices appointed by Christ? These are important questions; but we must take our answers, not from any man or set of men, but from the testimony of the "Faithful and True Witness" himself.

Elders (*Presbyteroi*, Presbyters,) or Bishops (*Episcopoi*, Overseers,) were appointed, not in one congregation, to rule over many, but in every congregation, Acts xiv. 23, and, consequently, in every city where there was one, Titus i. 5. Every man who filled this office was required to be "blameless, the husband of one wife,* vigilant,

* *The husband of one wife.*—This first part of the *blameless* character of such as were to be appointed to the office of *bishop*, has led some to consider no man qualified for that office, or for the office of a *deacon*, who, after the death of a first wife, marries a second. But how can this be the meaning of the words? Does not death dissolve the connection between husband and wife? Is it not, then, as *blameless*, yea as *honourable*, in a man to marry a second time as it was the first? This version of these words, which has led to a practice not much removed from the *Romish celibacy*, is similar to that of a Protestant translator, who, in his zeal against that doctrine of "the mother of harlots," thus rendered, Acts i. 14, "These all continued in prayer and supplication with *their wives!*" The words of the Apostle (*aner mias gynaikeos*) are literally *man of one woman*. Doubtless many who had been transgressors against the law of God, with regard to the honour of the marriage bed, both among the Jews, Matt. xix. 3—12, and among the Gentiles, Rom. i. 24, &c., became obedient to the faith preached to all nations;

sober,
to win
brawlie
children
elated v
1 Tim.
fast the
That
the New
was rec
example
and illus
the Gosp
Ephesus
and said
flock ove
pous), in
elders an
tions me
seer, how
translator
It is tru
rendered
also the
exhorted
being lord
I must be
honest ver
there spok

but by this
or a *deacon*
married ano
was to main
v., vi., vii.

* I am so
this passage
or *establish*
kept" in the
they had or
Lord." If
they disrega
word in 2 C
who was cho

office-bearers.
of the most per-
code of laws was
appointed guar-
re instituted for
ted. Indeed, the
be observed by
e body becomes

to the law-giver.
a breach of the
the penalties de-
set aside any of
usurps the place

himself a Christian,
ad of his church,
New Testament.
ce-bearers in the
What were the
ointed by Christ?
our answers, not
of the "Faithful

Episcopoi, Over-
rule over many,
quently, in every
n who filled this
ne wife,* vigilant,

ss character of such
to consider no man
r the death of a first
of the words? Does
Is it not, then, as
e as it was the first?
much removed from
tor, who, in his zeal
Acts i. 14, "These
The words of the
s. Doubtless many
ard to the honour of
9, and among the
ched to all nations:

sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach; not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous, one that ruled well his own house, having his children in subjection, with all gravity; not a new convert, lest being elated with pride, he should fall into the condemnation of the devil," 1 Tim. iii.; "not self-willed, a lover of good men, just, holy, holding fast the faithful word, as taught by the Apostles," Titus i.

That *elder* and *bishop* mean one and the same office is so plain in the New Testament, that no common degree of effrontery and artifice was required to hide it from the eyes of the people. One or two examples taken from our English version will serve to prove the one and illustrate the other. In the history of Paul's travels to propagate the Gospel, we are told, Acts xx. 17, that "from Miletus he sent to Ephesus, and called the elders of the church (*presbyterous tes ecclesias*), and said to them, ver. 28, Take heed unto yourselves, and to all the flock over the which the Holy Spirit hath made you *bishops*" (*episcopous*), in our English version, "hath made you *overseers*." Here the elders and bishops are the same persons, and, of course, these appellations mean one and the same office; but, if *episcopos* means *overseer*, how comes it that in no part of the New Testament have our translators so rendered that word, excepting in this solitary instance? It is true, indeed, that in another place, 1 Pet. v. 2, they have rendered *episcopountes* by the words *taking the oversight*, but there also the persons addressed are the *presbyterous*, ver. 1, who are exhorted to "feed and oversee the flock, not for filthy lucre, neither as being lords over the heritage." In justice, however, to our translators, I must here mention another passage, of which they have given an honest version, so far as it does not conceal that the elders and bishops there spoken of, are the same persons, and fill the same office;* I

but by this direction to Timothy and Titus, no man was to be appointed a *bishop* or a *deacon* who lived with more than one wife, who had put away a wife and married another, or who was not an example of purity to those among whom he was to maintain the injunction "to abstain from fornication," Acts xv., 1 Cor. v., vi., vii.

* I am sorry I cannot give unqualified praise to the whole of their version of this passage. Why was *catastases* rendered by *ordain*, in preference to *appoint* or *establish*? Because "the old ecclesiastical words" were ordered "to be kept" in their translation. For the same reason we read in Acts xiv. 23, "When they had *ordained* them elders in every church, they commended them to the Lord." If the word *cheirotoneo* is here properly rendered to *ordain*, why did they disregard King James's injunction, and prefer another version of the same word in 2 Cor. viii. 19? There we read, "We have sent with him the brother who was *chosen* of the churches to *travel* with us." In the first of these passages,

mean the instructions given by Paul to Titus, ch. i. : "I left thee in Crete, that thou shouldest ordain *elders* in every city. . . . If any be blameless : . . . for a *bishop* must be blameless;"—but the sense would have been more obvious had they given the latter part of these words thus—"for an *overseer** must be blameless."

From the passages of the last reference, it appears not only that the primitive churches had *presbyters* or *bishops* (the same office being understood by both these terms), but that each particular congregation was so furnished ; nay more, that every perfect organized church had a plurality of *overseers* or *elders*. Agreeably to this, we find Paul, after preaching the Gospel at different places, "ordained them *elders* in every congregation ;" and, when he writes to the believing Philippians, i. 1, he addresses his epistle to *all the saints*, with the *overseers* and *deacons*. It would be, however, begging more than the premises will warrant, to infer from this that no *assembly* of Christians could properly be called a *church*, where there was not two elders. Such an assertion would be a contradiction in terms. It would be asserting in the same breath and with the same words, that the people *congregated* or *assembled together* are not *congregated* or *assembled*. In the very nature of things, there can be no overseer till there be a flock to be looked after ; and, to affirm the contrary, would imply another contradiction as palpable as the former. In point of fact, we know that the first Christian assemblies were formed before the office-bearers were appointed. The very business of appointing elders in every church, which was performed by Paul and Barnabas, at Derbe, Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch, implies that at these places congregations were already established. Indeed, we are expressly told that Paul and Barnabas prayed with them, and commended them to the

Titus only is named ; in the second, they suppose the *ordination* to be made by Paul and Barnabas, exclusive of the churches ; but, in the third, the *ordination* was by the *churches* ; and an honest version might have shown that every Christian congregation has some share in ordaining its own officers. In an old translation, Acts xiv. 23 reads thus—"When they had *ordained* them elders by *election*, in every church, and prayed"—with a marginal note on the import of the original word, as furnishing a proof "that ministers were not made without the consent of the people." But James and his clergy disliked this version and these ideas.

* Had the word *episcopos* been uniformly rendered *overseer*, in our common version, it would have been more intelligible to the English reader, for whose benefit the translation was professed to be made. Whether it was from inattention or design, it is most singular that it has been rendered *bishop* wherever it occurs, excepting only in those places where it would have been obvious to every reader that that office and the office of elder is one and the same.

Lord, c
not be
be form
congreg
as perfe
Epistle
perfect
their or
wanting
to infer
order, a
the offic
pointed
seems
exist be
ber of
plurality
offices—
step tow
wards p
soon as
pointme
done de
blished i

It is
lected to
together
there is
This pas
ever a f
cation, h
exist. I
the sense
or "ass
same m
church"

* "Go
her camp
† The
(*synagoge*)

: "I left thee in If any useless?"—but the latter part of esse."

not only that the same office being particular congrega-organized church this, we find Paul, named them *elders* believing Philip—with the *overseers* than the premises Christians could no elders. Such could be asserting the people *con-* assembled. In all there be a flock could imply another of fact, we know before the office-appointing elders in Crispinus, at Darbe, places congrega- expressly told that added them to the

tion to be made by said, the *ordination* shown that every officers. In an old ned them elders by te on the import of not made without ed this version and

er, in our common reader, for whose was from inatten- bishop wherever it en obvious to every me.

Lord, on whom they believed, Acts xiv. 21, 23. But, though it cannot be questioned that, in the natural order of things, churches must be formed before pastors can be appointed, it is equally clear that no *congregation*, in the Scripture sense of the word, can be considered as perfectly organized till it has presbyters. We learn from Paul's Epistle to Titus, that different congregations in Crete were in this imperfect state; and therefore he speaks of them as still wanting part of their order, and desires Titus to "set in order the things that were wanting, and appoint elders in every city." From this we are bound to infer that it was the duty of Christian congregations to perfect their order, as soon as they could find among them persons qualified to fill the offices of overseers or elders, and deacons—the only offices appointed by the Apostles as necessary to their perfect order. And it seems reasonable also to infer that, as congregations might and did exist before bishops and deacons, and might be able, where the number of members was but small, to find only one person, instead of a plurality, endowed with the requisite character for either of these offices—in such a case, it was their duty to appoint that one, as a step towards their perfect organization; but, being only a step towards perfect order, and not that perfect order itself, they would, as soon as they could find others qualified for office, proceed to their appointment also, obeying the Apostolic injunction, "Let all things be done decently and in order,"—that is, agreeably to the order established in "the churches which in Judea were in *Christ Jesus*."

It is not essential that a large number of believers should be collected to establish a church. "Where *even* two or three are gathered together in the name of *Christ*, there is he in the midst of them,"—there is a church—there is a "daughter of Zion,"* Matt. xviii. 20. This passage is commonly considered merely as a promise, that wherever a few Christians meet in the name of *Christ*, for mutual edification, he will be with them to bless them. Of this no doubt can exist. But, however true this proposition may be in itself, it is not the sense of the passage; for the "two or three gathered together," or "assembled," (*Synegmenoi*, literally *synagogued*,) are the very same mentioned three verses before, ver. 17, and there called "the church" (*Ecclesia*).† The duty inculcated in this place, amounts

* "God is in the midst of her," Psa. xlv. i. Zeph. iii. 14, Zech. ii. 10. "Let her camp be kept undefiled," Num. v. 2, 3; 2 Cor. vi. 14—vii. 1.

† The mere English reader should be informed that *Ecclesia* and *synagoge* (*synagogue*), have precisely the same signification, namely, "congregation" or

then to this—that in no place were his disciples to neglect the mode of discipline pointed out by their Master, on the pretext that they were not sufficiently numerous to consider themselves as a church; for, though their number should not exceed “two” or “three,” if gathered together in his name, or, in other words, associated for the purpose of observing his ordinances, the *all things* commanded by him—he “who walketh in the midst of the churches” (Rev. ii. 1), assures them he will be present in their assembly. But, if so small a number constitutes a church, it follows that a church may exist without a plurality of presbyters and deacons, though it is equally plain from the Scriptures, that where the number of believers, and the gifts found among them admit the regulation, they are bound to have such a plurality.

In the next Section, I shall, as far as I have been able to discover it, state what appears in the Scriptures respecting the election of those office-bearers, called *Presbyters* or *Bishops*.

SECTION IV.—Of the Election of Bishops or Presbyters, and their Duties.

That the election of the bishops was in the whole congregation, is not expressed in so many words in the New Testament, but may be most certainly inferred from the instructions given to Timothy and Titus, respecting those who were to be appointed to offices. They were to be persons of irreproachable character, on the most positive proof, adduced—by whom, but by the congregation? Without this proof they could not be set apart to their office, by the imposition of hands, which was the method employed, and therefore Timothy is charged—“lay hands suddenly on no man.” The same inference may be drawn from the injunctions given to the churches to live in unity, “being perfectly joined together in the same mind, and in the same judgment, avoiding all contentions,” 1 Cor. i. 10; for how could this be, if they were not agreed respecting the character of those set

“assembly.” Thus, in Acts xiii. 42, we are told, that “when the Jews were gone out of the (*synagoge*) synagogue, the Gentiles begged that the same words might be preached to them the next Sabbath;” and that “when the (*synagoge*) congregation was broken up, many of the Jews and religious proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas.” And the Apostle James, ii., speaking of meetings of the church, says, “If there come into your (*synagogen*) assembly a man with a gold ring,” &c.

over the
in any
election
ration, a
Timothy
exceptin
i. 18, P
accordin
them mi
“Negle
phcy, w
these co
that thou
on of m
prophecy
not inter
informs
had been
mitted to
might w
of all cre
second, t
with wh
“Give s
upon the
ner, the
relates to
testimony
which th
is called
appointed
being ma
manner i
and the l
one (i.e.,
the impos
a gift or
respectin
tioned as
we exami

over them? But how was their mind and judgment to be ascertained in any case, if not as publicly expressed as we know it was in the election of the "seven deacons" at Jerusalem? From this consideration, a probable interpretation may be offered of two passages in first Timothy, which have embarrassed all the commentators I have seen, excepting those who are never embarrassed with any thing. In chap. i. 18, Paul says, "This *charge* I commit unto thee, son Timothy, according to the *prophecies* which went before on thee, that thou by them mightest war a good warfare." And in chap. iv. 14, he says, "Neglect not *the gift that is in thee*, which was given thee by *prophecy*, with *the laying on of the hands* of the presbytery." With these compare 2 Tim. i. 6, "Wherefore I put thee in remembrance, that thou stir up *the gift of God*, which is in thee, *by the putting on of my hands*." Here is something conferred on Timothy, "by prophecy" and "the laying on of hands." That miraculous gifts are not intended here, is plain from all the contexts. In the first, Paul informs him that "our Lord had put him (Paul) into the ministry, who had been before a blasphemer"—this ministry is the *charge* committed to Timothy, who was properly appointed to his office, "that he might war a good warfare, holding faith (viz., 'the true saying, worthy of all credit,' mentioned in ver. 15) and a good conscience." In the second, the *charge* is called "the gift that is in thee," i.e., the charge with which he was vested; and what this was we are plainly told—"Give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine; meditate upon these things, give thyself wholly to them," &c. In like manner, *the gift* which he is exhorted to excite, in the Second Epistle, relates to the same duties—"Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, hold fast the form of sound words, which thou has heard of me," &c. This office, conferred on Timothy, is called *God's gift*, because those who are elected in the manner appointed by God, are considered as appointed by God himself—"as being made overseers by the Holy Spirit," Acts xx. 28. Now, the manner in which Timothy received this charge was "by prophecy and the laying on of the hands of the presbytery," of which Paul was one (i.e., he was an elder as well as an apostle.) Of the meaning of the imposition of hands there is no question: but what is meant by a *gift* or *charge* conferred by *prophecy*? One thing appears plainly respecting it—it preceded the laying on of hands, and is twice mentioned as a proceeding that was necessarily previous to it. Now, if we examine the instructions given to Timothy respecting the appoint-

ment of office-bearers, to discover what was necessary previous to the imposition of hands upon them, we see that the thing required was, that their *blameless character and ability in the faith to teach others should first be proved*. The *prophecy* here spoken of appears then to allude to the *testimony* of the congregation to the conduct and qualifications of the party; for we may be sure that Timothy would be appointed agreeably to the method enjoined to be observed in all the congregations of Christ. Nor is this imposing any new sense on the word *prophet* or *prophecy*; for Paul, in his Epistle to Titus, i. 12, 13, says of the Cretans, that "one of their own *prophets witnessed truly*, when he called them liars, evil beasts, and slow bellies."

Besides, if the voice, not of the Apostles only, but of the whole church, was necessary in the appointment of an Apostle, to be a witness, with the eleven, of the resurrection of Christ, that he might take that place in the Apostleship from which Judas, by transgression, fell, which we are expressly informed (Acts i.) was the case; and if the election of the deacons belonged to the whole multitude, (Acts vi.) can it be doubted for a moment, that they also elected their own elders? An elder, it is true, is not an Apostle, but we know that the Apostles were elders, 1 Peter v. 1, 2, and 3, John ver. 1; and therefore, in electing an Apostle, they elected an elder.

To this I shall add the testimony of a man, who could not be mistaken in his assertions respecting the primitive practice, having himself been set apart to the office of presbyter in the Apostolic age—the testimony which will also prove that the office of bishop and presbyter was in his time the same. I mean that of Clement, whom Paul (Philipp. iv. 3.) calls one of his "fellow-labourers, whose names are written in the book of life." In his first Epistle to the Corinthians,* (who, as appears by that Epistle, had carried the spirit of

* Or, rather, as its own title runs, *The Epistle of the Congregation of God at Rome, to the Congregation of God at Corinth*. A late learned and ingenious writer speaks of this Epistle in the following terms: "Next to the sacred canon, the most ancient and valuable monument we have of Christian antiquity, is a very long letter to the Corinthians, from a bishop of Rome, Clement, who had been cotemporary with the Apostles, and is mentioned by Paul, in one of his Epistles. So much the reverse do we find here of every thing that looks like authority and state, that this worthy pastor, in the true spirit of primitive and Christian humility, sinks his own name entirely in that of the Congregation to which he belonged, and does not desire that he should be considered otherwise than as any other individual of the society; a manner very unlike that of his successors, and quite incompatible with their claims."—*Campbell's Lectures on Ecclesiastical History*, vol. ii. p. 81.

faction
as to th
been
Gospel
preachi
for bish
new de
uges be
appoint
Here o
Divine
Apostles
as it ha
ment, w
no room
and only
The Apo
tention v
the same
a perfect
before s
above), s
and app
cannot th
office, wh

* Clement
our version
His transla
The Hebrew
rendered o
word, thou
merely bec
of Israel pe
unless we c
term, thy o
word is deri
take care of
The origina
gate gives th
ponam visit
the Prophet
tuos in just
clude that C
to be the me
tation. But
cannot be m

previous to the
g required was,
to teach others
en of appears
o the conduct
that Timothy
to be observed
osing any new
his Epistle to
own prophets
ists, and slow

of the whole
ostle, to be
that he might
transgression,
e case; and if
altitude, (Acts
ted their own
know that the
1; and there-

ld not be mis-
, having him-
ostolic age—
hop and pres-
ement, whom
whose names
o the Corin-
the spirit of

egation of God
l and ingenious
he sacred canon,
liquity, is a very
who had been
of his Epistles.
like authority
and Christian
n to which he
ise than as any
successors, and
Ecclesiastical

faction and distinction, for which Paul reproved them, to such a degree as to throw some of their elders out of the office to which they had been appointed,) chap. xl. 11; speaking of the publication of the Gospel by the Apostles, who were sent by Christ, he says, "Thus preaching in countries and towns, they appointed their first converts for bishops and deacons of those who should believe; nor was this a new device, since bishops and deacons had been pointed out many ages before; for thus saith the Scripture, in a certain place, 'I will appoint their bishops in righteousness, and their deacons in faith.'"^{*} Here only two offices, bishops and deacons, are mentioned as of Divine appointment. He goes on, in chap. xliii., to show that to the Apostles it was committed by God, in Christ, to establish the offices, as it had before been committed to Moses to settle, by God's appointment, what related to the service of the sanctuary, that there might be no room left for strife, and that in everything the name of the true and only God might be glorified: and then proceeds thus, in chap. xlv.: The Apostles foreknew, through our Lord Jesus Christ, that contention would arise about the name of the bishop's office (*episcopos*, the same word that is used in 1 Tim. iii. 1); and therefore, having a perfect foreknowledge of this, they appointed persons, as we have before said (*viz.*, to the offices of bishops and deacons, mentioned above), and gave directions, that when they should die, other *chosen* and *approved* men might succeed them in their office. Hence we cannot think that, with justice, those may be expelled from their office, who were appointed by them, or by faithful men afterwards,

* Clement quotes this passage from Isaiah lx. 17, which is thus rendered in our version, "I will make mine officers peace, and thine exactors righteousness." His translation, however, comes nearer to the sense of the original than ours. The Hebrew word which our translators have rendered *exactors*, is by the Seventy rendered *overseers*, (*episcopous*, bishops), and such is really the sense of the word, though in different places it is rendered *task masters* in our version, merely because the *overseers* spoken of were appointed to see that the children of Israel performed the work required of them. But they were equally bishops, unless we choose to alter the natural meaning of words. The other Hebrew term, *thy officers*, is by the Seventy rendered *archontas*, rulers, but the Hebrew word is derived from one which signifies, properly, to look after, to inspect, to take care of, to take account of, which is the very duty of a deacon of the church. The original word imports not only officers, but the kind of officers. The Vulgate gives the sense of the passage much more correctly than our version, thus, *ponam visitationem tuam pacem et prepositos tuos iustitiam*.—Irenæus, quoting the Prophet, renders the passage thus: *dabo principes tuos in pace, et episcopos tuos in iustitia*.—Lib. 4, c. 44, p. 728, folio 1580. On the whole, we may conclude that Clement's version gives that sense which the Apostles themselves held to be the meaning of the prophecy, for he could not be ignorant of their interpretation. But, however this may be, the purpose for which he quotes the passage cannot be mistaken.



(ANSI and ISO TEST CHART No. 2)



1653 East Main Street
Rochester, New York 14609 USA
(716) 482 - 0300 - Phone
(716) 288 - 5989 - Fax

"with the consent of the whole congregation," and who have, with all humbleness and purity, ministered to the flock of Christ, in peace, and disinterestedly, and were for a long time commended by all. For it is a heinous sin to thrust from the *bishop's office* (*episcopos*, overseership) those who holily and unblameably discharge its duties. "Blessed are those presbyters (*presbyteroi*) who, having already finished their course, have obtained a fruitful and perfect dissolution—they have no cause to fear being thrust out of the situation in which they are (now) established. But you have thrust some of unblameable life from the office with which they were, *without blame*, and innocently adorned." Here those whom it was a heinous sin to dismiss from the *oversheership* or *bishop's office*, are the very presbyters whom these Corinthians had driven from their office, though they had been appointed in that manner which they were bound to admit was without blame. That is, they had been appointed by the Apostles themselves, or by faithful men after their decease, with the consent of the whole congregation, their characters having been first approved, agreeably to the Apostolic injunction given to Timothy and Titus, therefore no exception could be taken to the legality of their appointment; and, having behaved themselves *holily and unblameably* in the office, the Corinthians were altogether inexcusable in their conduct towards them. Clement, by his argument, admits that, could they have urged any solid objection against the manner of their appointment, or the life and conduct of these elders, their proceeding would have been justifiable; and indeed this is evident from the New Testament, for in Christian congregations nothing can be permitted contrary to the rules of Christ, and they are commanded to separate themselves from every brother that walketh disorderly.* But these

* Numerous authorities might be adduced to prove that, as Christian congregations had the power to elect their bishops, so also, for centuries, they had the power to depose them, if their character and conversation were found unbecoming the office, and to choose others in their room: but I shall here only mention the case of Martialis and Basilides, two Spanish bishops, who, for apostacy and idolatry, were set aside by their congregations, who elected Felix and Sabinus in their stead. By desire of these parishes, several African bishops had a meeting, anno 258, in which Cyprian presided, which approved their conduct; stating "That the Divine law was express that none but those who were holy and blameless should approach God's altar; that had they continued in communion with these profane bishops, they would have been accessaries to their guilt, and have acted contrary to those examples and commands in Scripture, which enjoin Christians to separate wicked and ungodly ministers from their fellowship; and that they had not acted irregularly in what they had done, since, as the people had the chief power in choosing worthy bishops, so also had they to reject those that were unworthy."—*Cypriani Opera*, fol. 1593, p. 200, 201. Observe, the

men co
had dor
chap. x
and un
ancient
one or
those th
Lord is
brought

The c
Testame
to the fl
Spirit, f
God, wh
"holding
faith and
an objec
congrega

SECTION

In spe
edly to
(*diacono*
rendered

people had
including

Almost
for some
bishops.

the compu
Cyprian w
as Pontius
Cyprian hi
stood as ar
or even a
of his lett
Rome, on
choose a s
and when
suffrage of

* As in
him hand
be great
Son of Ma
(*diaconesi*

men could urge neither the one ground nor the other for what they had done, and therefore he censures them severely for their conduct, chap. xlvii.—“It is a shame, yea, a very great shame, my beloved, and unworthy of your Christian institution, that the most firm and ancient congregation of the Corinthians should, by the instigation of one or two persons, rise up against its *presbyters*. Not only we, but those that are without have heard of it, insomuch that the name of the Lord is reviled through your wickedness, and even ye yourselves are brought into danger.”

The duties of elders or bishops are plainly pointed out in the New Testament. They are required to “take heed unto themselves and to the flock over which they have been made overseers by the Holy Spirit, for this very purpose, that they may feed the congregation of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood,” Acts xx. 28; “holding fast the form of sound words, taught by the Apostles, in faith and love,” 2 Tim. i. 13. But, as their duties must necessarily be an object of discussion in treating of their joint acts, along with the congregation, I shall not here take up more of the reader’s time.

SECTION V.—*Of Deacons, male and female; their election and their duties.*

In speaking of bishops or presbyters, we have had occasion repeatedly to observe, that the Apostolic congregations had also deacons (*diaconoi*). The word means *servant* or *minister*, and is often so rendered in our common version.* Not only males but females were

people had the *chief power* not the whole power, for that lay in the congregation, including the elders and deacons, as well as the rest of the members.

Almost innumerable testimonies might be produced to prove that it continued for some centuries to be the practice that every congregation elected its own bishops. Thus Alexander was appointed bishop of the church at Jerusalem, by the compulsion or choice of the members.—*Euseb.* lib. vi. cap. 11. At Carthage, Cyprian was chosen bishop, “by the grace of God and the favour of the people,” as Pontius, a deacon of the same church testifies (in *Vita Cypriani*), and as Cyprian himself states in several of his epistles. Nor can it possibly be understood as an election by the clergy for the people, or by a part of the congregation, or even a majority of it, but by the unanimous consent of the whole; for, in one of his letters, his words are “*Populi universi suffragio*.”—Ep. 55, § 7. At Rome, on the death of Antennus, all the brethren met in the congregation to choose a successor, and unanimously chose Fabianus (*Euseb.* lib. vi. cap. 28); and when Cornelius was appointed bishop on the death of Fabianus, it was by the suffrage of the clergy and people.—*Cyprian*, Ep. 67, § 2.

* As in Matt. xxii. 13, “Then said the King to the servants (*diaconois*), bind him hand and foot, and take him away;” and in Matt. xx. 26, “Whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister (*diaconos*), . . . even as the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto (*diakonethenai*), but to minister (*diakonesai*), and to give his life a ransom for many.”

appointed to this office. That men were, is plain, from the directions given respecting their appointment: "Let the deacons be the husband of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well. Deacons must likewise be grave, not double-tongued, not given to much wine, not greedily of filthy lucre, holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience. And let these, also, first be proved: then let them use the office of a deacon, if found blameless," 1 Tim. iii. 8—12.

That women were also *deacons*, or *deaconesses*, if the reader prefers that term,* is evident from what Paul says to the believers at Rome: "I commend unto you Phebe, our sister, who is a *servant* (*diaconon*) of the church at Cenchrea," Rom. xvi. 1. These are the women mentioned in the First Epistle to Timothy, iii. 11;† and none could be appointed to this office but such as were "grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things;" and farther, in the same epistle, ch. v., we learn that there were to be *widows*, and that none could be "taken into the number under three score years old, having been the wife (or woman) of one man (an example of chastity), well reported of for good works," &c. They were to be supported by the church, unless they had believing children, or other near relations, in which case they were to be provided for by the latter. As none but widows of a certain age could be appointed to this office, those who were appointed are emphatically called *the widows*, to be distinguished from the younger widows, who, by marrying again, might be obliged to relinquish the duties of such an office, to attend to their own family concerns. That they are called *the widows*, not because being aged, they

* In the Greek, the appointment of both sexes to this office is so plain as not to require any kind of argument to prove it; for that *le* marks the gender of the *servant* as precisely as the words *master* and *maid* do that of the *ma's* or female head of the family.

† Our translators, by the help of a large supplement, have converted these *women* into the *deacons' wives*! It is true, indeed, that the word (*gynaikas*) here employed may (according to the exigency of the place where it occurs) be either rendered *women* or *wives*, but not *their wives*; and, if they had looked farther in this epistle, they would have seen that not *wives* but *widows* are the subject of the passage. The Apostle is there giving directions respecting the character of those who were to be appointed to offices, and tells Timothy, ver. 2, "A bishop must be blameless," &c., and I, having finished what he had to say of the bishops, he proceeds, ver. 8, "Deacons likewise (or, in like manner, *osautos*—i.e., in like manner as the bishops) *must be grave*," and must be tried or proved as to the required qualifications; and then adds, ver. 11, "Women, likewise, grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things"—that is, in like manner, the women *must be grave*, &c., for the adverb *osautos* (in like manner) occurs both in the 8th and in the 11th, and in the original exactly the same construction is followed in both: so that it comes to the same thing as if he had said in the latter verse, "the women appointed to this office, or the female deacons, must in like manner have their characters proved."

had a right
ration, th
married d
of which
of Christ
would ha
if in othe
enjoins th
servants,
secondly,
they perf
man or v
and let no
are widow
circumsta
saries and

From t
account in
what thei
lenists, co
ministrati
ground for
been some
reason wh
particular
to prayer
to expect
among you
wisdom, w
we learn,
church's b
was to atte
affairs, but
body of the
tude, and
prayer and

As the c
the widows
which it w
men, or ev

had a right to be *honoured*, that is, *supported*, is plain from this consideration, that all poor believers, whether male or female, young or old, married or single, who cannot, by their industry, supply those things of which they stand in need, have the same right in all the churches of Christ. That *the widows*, by attending to the duties of this office, would have little or no time left to provide for their own wants, even if in other respects qualified, was obvious, and therefore the Apostle enjoins the churches, first to have a particular eye upon these willing servants, that they might want nothing necessary to their comfort; and secondly, to pay attention to the relatives of such widows, to see that they perform their duty towards them, for the injunction is, "If any man or woman that believeth have widows, let them relieve them, and let not the congregation be charged, that it may relieve them that are widows indeed," not only so by their office, but by their desolate circumstances, and want of relatives to supply them with the necessities and comforts of life, 1 Tim. v.

From the first appointment of male deacons, of which we have an account in the 6th chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, we learn in what their duty was to consist. The believing Greek Jews, or Hellenists, complained that their widows were neglected in the daily ministration (*diaconia*); nor is it denied that there perhaps was ground for the complaint; on the contrary, that there might have been some unintentional neglect, seems to be admitted, in the very reason which the Apostles assign for appointing men to attend to this particular business. They had themselves so much to do in attending to prayer and to the ministration of the word, that it was unreasonable to expect them to serve tables: "Wherefore (say they) look ye out among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business." From this passage we learn, not only that the duty of these men was to take care of the church's bounty and see it properly applied, that those whose duty it was to attend to spiritual concerns might not be incumbered with such affairs, but also, that the election of these deacons belonged to the body of the congregation: for, "the saying pleased *the whole multitude*, and *they chose*" the seven that were set apart to this office, by prayer and the laying on of the hands of the Apostles.

As the deacons were bound to attend to this particular business, the widows or deaconesses had other services of mercy to perform, in which it would have been neither proper nor delicate to employ the men, or even the younger widows; of this, an instance is recorded

in the 9th chapter of the Acts of the Apostles. A certain female disciple had died at Joppa, and Peter being then at Lydda, a place in the neighbourhood of the former, *the disciples* sent two men to beg he would make haste to come to them. "When he was come, they brought him into an upper chamber (where the body lay); and *all the widows* stood by him weeping, and showing the coats and garments which Dorcas made while she was with them." That *the widows* attended this woman in her sickness, and washed and laid her in the upper chamber after her death; and that the particular mention here made of them is not casual, is plain from the narrative; for it was not *the widows*, but the disciples generally at Joppa that sent for Peter; "and Peter put them *all* forth," not only the disciples, but the widows, "and kneeled down and prayed, and the woman was restored to life." It is true only *the widows* are particularly named in part of the narrative, but this is the very circumstance that proves the nature of their office. In one part it is stated that "the widows stood by Peter weeping," without notice of the presence of any other; but it is expressly stated that it was not the widows, but others that brought him into the upper chamber, and therefore the *all* that were put out of the room includes others besides these women. Indeed, every doubt on this point is removed by the subsequent part of the narrative, where those that were put forth are called in again, namely, *the saints and widows*, to whom he presented her alive. It follows, then, that *the widows* are here distinguished from the other *saints* on account of their office, though, as believers, they might be considered as included in the appellation *saints*—exactly in the same manner as the overseers and deacons are mentioned along with the saints at Philippi, though making part of their number.

SECTION VI.—*Of the Independence of the Christian Congregations, established by the Apostles.*

In the observations which I have offered respecting the office-bearers appointed by the Apostles, for the government of Christian congregations, I have endeavoured to be as brief as the nature of the subject would admit. The sum of the whole amounts to this:—No presbyter or bishop was allowed to superintend more than one congregation; on the contrary, every congregation had a plurality of them; nor is it possible, in the nature of things, that one shepherd can tend two flocks in different places. The office of presbyter or

elder, and any idea were a in the S the church these two from am only had vining p in world possible. and man it was co

But th the same lands the mitted to they wer "not wit having or members Father,— were co common had all po and the v discipline, peal, and law of the Acting un lawgiver, in heaven loosed in h

This co Christian far from b ssemblies, and prerog more than wisdom to

elder, and overseer or bishop, is one and the same office; of course, any idea of inequality between the two terms is an absurdity. Deacons were also appointed, male and female. No other office is mentioned in the Scriptures, as belonging to the Apostolic churches; nor can the churches of Christ (whatever others may do) admit of any, except these two. Every congregation elected its own bishops and deacons, from among its own members; and in this election every member not only had a voice, but the suffrages were unanimous!—a most convincing proof that the churches of Christ are under his guidance; for in worldly churches or societies of any kind, the thing would be impossible. And, as every congregation elected its own office-bearers, and managed its own affairs without any foreign interference whatever, it was consequently complete in itself, and perfectly independent.

But though the congregations, not only in different countries, but in the same district, like the *fountains and streams* which watered the lands they inhabited, were independent of each other, and not permitted to call any man *Master*, as having a right to legislate for them, they were not allowed to legislate for themselves. Yet were they “not without law, but under law to Christ,” their lawgiver; and having one common Master, they had fellowship with each other, as members of the same household of faith, and children of the same Father,—an appellation which, as implying a right to govern, they were commanded to give to no man upon earth, but only to their common Father in heaven, Matt. xxiii. 8, 9. Every congregation had all power within itself; it elected its own elders and deacons, and the whole members gave their judgment in all cases of public discipline, 2 Cor. ii. 6, 7,—a judgment from which there was no appeal, and which was sure to be righteous, while they adhered to the law of their Master, the only one allowed to be consulted among them. Acting under this authority, they had the assurance of the supreme lawgiver, that “whatsoever they should bind on earth would be bound in heaven, and whatsoever they should loose on earth would be loosed in heaven,” Matt. xviii. 18.

This complete and perfect independence of all and each of the Christian congregations, in the management of their own concerns, so far from being calculated to produce turbulence in the different assemblies, and to beget a spirit of democracy dangerous to the power and prerogatives of the civil magistrate, as some impious men have more than insinuated, was in fact the means appointed by infinite wisdom to prevent both; and had the magistrates wisely obliged them

to remain independent of each other, no churchman would ever have acquired the power to put his foot on the neck of kings, setting up his own authority above that of the sovereign of the earth. This truth will be amply illustrated in the course of these Dissertations, preparatory to which it may not be improper to offer a few observations respecting the manner in which the meetings of Christian congregations were conducted, and their affairs in general managed; for only by a right understanding of this, can a correct opinion be formed of the evils that resulted to the Christian profession, and to those states and empires which came within its influence, by deviations from the primitive practice, and by the introduction of worldly policy and other laws than the sole head of the church had appointed for its government. To this I shall devote the next section.

SECTION VII.—Of the Public Meetings of the Primitive Christians.

Every congregation, consisting of the believers in one place or neighbourhood, met as frequently as circumstances would possibly allow, "to offer, by Jesus Christ, the sacrifice of praise to God," Heb. xiii. 15, "and to comfort themselves together and edify one another," 1 Thess. v. 11. At these meetings, though all the elders were present, only one presided, and took the lead in the service. Indeed, in the very nature of a public meeting, a president* is necessary, to preserve order and prevent confusion; and, in point of fact, we know that this was the case with the primitive churches; for we have seen that they had a plurality of overseers or elders, and yet we find a presiding elder in the church of Ephesus, Smyrna, &c., called *the angel* † of this or that particular congregation, Rev. ii. 1, 8, &c. That the same elder could not always preside, is self-evident, for indisposition and other causes would sometimes prevent his presence; nor, so far as I can find from the Scriptures, was any injunction given, that this duty should fall more particularly on any individual. But from the repeated exhortations given to every member of the church

* Jesus did not deny his disciples a *president*, but, as they were not to be guided by worldly authority, he chose one void of that authority, "and set him in the midst of them!" Matt. xviii. 1, 2, &c.

† In the Jewish synagogues, the elder who presided in the service was styled *the angel* of the congregation. This term, therefore, (indeed the term *elder*, also,) was borrowed from the synagogue; nor was there any necessity to contrive new names to express functions for which appropriate terms already existed. Even the title *episcopus* was familiar at Jerusalem, where there were always a number of Hellenists, for it occurs more than once in the Septuagint.

"to hon
them; a
1 Thess.
each in
ii. 3. V
extra toil
himself;
a more h
another.
be a cont
regarded)
other, wa
in such a
more ven
called to
assiduity
such a pe
inconveni
tentionally
How of
vice, is no
passages, t
the week,
Master," &
of Christ c
are comma
but to exh
Heb. x. 24
attend to
and to "fe
Christ," vi
and doctrin
to such an

* Not that
of this duty.
congregation.
course, be des
called in Gr
(Tertul, *de p*
listened—they
it is described
(Justin Mart

ould ever have
, setting up his
n. This truth
tions, prepara-
v observations
ian congrega-
aged; for only
be formed of
o those states
tions from the
olicy and other
or its govern-

ve Christians.

one place or
ould possibly
aise to God,"
and edify one
all the elders
the service.
ent* is neces-
point of fact,
ches; for we
s, and yet we
a, &c., called
. ii. 1, 8, &c.
ident, for in-
his presence;
unction given,
ividual. But
f the church

vere not to be
"and set him

ice was styled
he term *elder*,
sity to contrive
already existed.
were always n
int.

"to honour those that were set over them in the Lord, who admonish them; and to esteem them very highly in love for their works' sake," 1 Thess. v. 12; and to "do nothing through strife or vain glory, but each in lowliness of mind to esteem others better than himself," Phil. ii. 3. We may infer, that so far as this duty could be considered an extra toil to the individual, none would thrust it on another to save himself; and, on the other hand, that, so far as it might be considered a more honourable station for the time, each would be ready to prefer another. On this point, then, the only contest in those days would be a contest of kindness (that is, where the commands of Christ were regarded); for any thing like lordship or authority, in one over another, was expressly prohibited, Matt. xx. 25; Luke xxii. 25. But in such a contest, it is easy to see, that if any bishop in particular was more venerable than another, whether by being the first that was called to the office, and consequently the senior elder, or by exemplary assiduity and a happy facility in performing the duties of the office, such a person would naturally be called to the chief seat, when not inconvenient to himself, and by usage would acquire, however unintentionally, a kind of right by possession.

How often the primitive Christian congregations met for public service, is not mentioned in Scripture, but it is plain, from numerous passages, that they met frequently, and particularly on the first day of the week, "to commemorate the death and resurrection of their Master," Acts xx. 7. Many of the duties enjoined them as disciples of Christ could in no other manner be performed; and therefore they are commanded "not to forsake the assembling of themselves together, but to exhort, and provoke one another to love and to good works," Heb. x. 24, 25. In their assemblies, it was the duty of the elders to attend to *reading*,* to *exhortation*, and *instruction*, 1 Tim. iv. 13; and to "feed the flock with the wholesome words of our Lord Jesus Christ," vi. 3; to "reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all long suffering and doctrine," 2 Tim. iv. 2, and with all the *authority* that belongs to such an important office, Tit. ii. 15; but "avoiding foolish and

* Not that the bishop *only* was to read,—he was to enforce the performance of this duty. Any person called up by him, read in the hearing of the whole congregation. He who was esteemed the best reader would, as a matter of course, be desired oftener than others, and in time was considered as an officer, called in Greek *ὁ ἀναγινώσκων*, (*Justin Martyr*, Apol. 2,) in Latin *Lector*, (*Tertul., de prescript advers Hæret.*) i.e., a Reader. He read and the people listened—they did not read alternately; and therefore, when this duty was ended, it is described only by the reader, and not the congregation, ceasing to read.—(*Justin Martyr*, Apol. 2.)

unedifying questions, which only serve to beget strife, for the servant of the Lord must not quarrel, but be gentle towards all, instructing proposers with meekness," 2 Tim. ii. 24. In one word, they were to "look to themselves and to all the flock," Acts xx. 28—"watching for their souls as those who must give account," Heb. xiii. 17; "exercising the overseership, not as lords over an inheritance of their own, but as ensamples to the believers; not seeking filthy lucre as their reward, but that crown of glory which they shall receive, when the chief Shepherd shall appear," 1 Pet. v. 2—4.

Reading the Scriptures, exhorting to the performance of those duties which they enjoin, and teaching each other the divine truths which they contain, appear plainly from these passages, to have occupied much of the attention of the Christian assemblies. To these duties they added prayers and praises to the Most High,* being expressly enjoined to "offer the sacrifice of praise to God, continually, that is, the fruit of the lips, giving thanks to his name," Heb. xiii. 15; and to "offer up," as an indispensable part of their public and joint services, "supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgiving, for all men; for kings, and for all that are in authority;" praying that every member

* The order in which these different services were observed is nowhere laid down in the Scriptures, only that they were to be performed;—of course the order would sometimes depend upon circumstances, and might vary in different places. Justin Martyr states that, in his time (anno 155,) first of all the writings of the Prophets and Apostles were read, (Apol. 2.) Tertullian, about 40 or 50 years later, speaking of the public service, states the order thus: "The Scriptures are read, psalms sung, comforting discourses are spoken, and prayers presented." (*De Anima*, c. iii.) As to "the commanded memorial of Christ's unspeakable love," it is called by the Apostles *the Lord's Supper*, which not only refers to the time when it was instituted, *the evening* when the paschal lamb was killed—*the night much to be remembered*—but the connection in which he so speaks of it, (1 Cor. xi. 20, 21,) shews that it was observed about *supper time*. It is also designed *the breaking of bread*, perhaps from "the Lord's making himself known in the breaking of bread" to the two disciples, at Emmaus, "on the evening of the first day of the week," Luke xxiv. 30, 35; Acts ii. 42. xx. 7. Justin Martyr speaks of this ordinance as observed in the conclusion of the public service, after the reading, the preaching, and the prayers, (Apol. 2.)—A diligent enquirer for the Apostolic paths, quoting Acts xx. 7, upon this subject, says, "Unless we shall deny that this text binds Christ's disciples to assemble for worship every first day of the week, we must acknowledge that it obliges them to come together every first day of the week to break bread. And how then can we pretend subjection to the authority of the Scripture, in our coming together to worship on that day, while we are neglecting that very ordinance of worship to which that same authority calls us together on that day? If we pretend our unfitness to excuse us from coming to the Lord's supper, that same excuse will serve as well for our not ceasing from our own works, nor assembling with the people of God on the Lord's day; for the profession is as great in the one as in the other. The keeping of the Lord's day is a solemn profession of the faith, love, and hope that is in Christ, as well as the eating of the Lord's supper."

of the ch
and hone
would bri
God, and
Jesus," 1
"who bei
things equ
no reputa
likeness o
—"suffer
1 Pet. iii.
in their p
they were
congregati
That th
tested, and
quoted, ne
quire whe
ministers
We are
out, after
at Jerusale
Judea and
was not th
mained at
performed
the duty ar
of the men
not an elder
went down
them—and
women"—
not as a de
common du
to his abilit
thians, ch.
of that cong
is, to teach
duced by th
a doctrine,

for the servant
1, instructing p-
rd, they were to
28—"watching
Heb. xiii. 17;
eritance of their
filthy lucre as
il receive, when

ce of those duties
e truths which
have occupied
To these duties
being expressly
inually, that is,
xiii. 15; and
nd joint services,
ng, for all men;
t every member

is no where laid
of course the order
in different places.
e writings of the
t 40 or 50 years
he Scriptures are
ayers presented."
rist's unspeakable
not only refers to
l lamb was killed
hich he so speaks
pper time. It is
s making himself
us," on the even-
42. xx. 7. Justin
of the public ser-
t.)—A diligent en-
this subject, says,
assemble for wor-
obliges them to
ad how then can
coming together
nance of worship
... If we pre-
pper, that same
orks, nor assem-
ion is as great in
solemn profession
ng of the Lord's

of the church might "lead a quiet and peaceable life, in all godliness and honesty, and that God, who willet men of all ranks to be saved, would bring many to the knowledge of the truth," respecting the One God, and One Mediator between God and man, "the Man Christ Jesus," 1 Tim. ii. 1—5,—“the Man God's Fellow,” Zech. xiii. 7—“who being in God-form, thought it no robbery that he should have things *equal* (*i. e.*, adequate) to God-head; and yet made himself of no reputation, took on him the form of a servant, was made in the likeness of men, and became obedient unto death,” Philip. ii. 6, 7, 8—“suffering the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God,” 1 Pet. iii. 18. These being the services in which they were employed in their public assemblies, it is necessary that we should inquire who they were that exhorted and taught, and acted as the organ of the congregation in its addresses to the throne of grace?

That the elders often performed these duties is, I believe, not contested, and therefore particular passages, in addition to those already quoted, need not be adduced as proofs. But it may be useful to inquire whether the congregations had a right to throw upon their ministers every duty but that of hearing and receiving instruction.

We are informed, Acts viii., that on the persecution which broke out, after the death of Stephen, against the congregation which was at Jerusalem, “the members were all scattered abroad, throughout Judea and Samaria, and went every where preaching the word.” It was not the Apostles, for we are told expressly that they still “remained at Jerusalem,” but those who were “scattered abroad,” that performed these duties. Hence it appears that, at that time, it was the duty and practice of all the believers to preach the word. One of the members who thus preached, and who had been appointed not an *elder*, but a *deacon*, is mentioned by name, viz., “Philip, who went down to the city of Samaria, and preached *the Christ* unto them—and, when they believed, they were baptised both men and women”—as was also the Ethiopian Eunuch. This he did, however, not as a deacon, for his duty as such was *to serve tables*, but as a common duty, which every believer was bound to perform according to his ability. It appears also from Paul's First Epistle to the Corinthians, ch. xiv., to have been the duty and privilege of the members of that congregation (with consequently every other) *to prophecy*, that is, *to teach*; and that, at that time, some confusion was often produced by the readiness of *every one of them*, to sing or speak *a psalm*, *a doctrine*, or *a revelation*, and some of them in an *unknown tongue*.

Is their liberty of speech reproved by the Apostle? No, but their indiscreet use of it—some of them speaking with tongues when there was no interpreter present, and when, consequently, the congregation could not be edified by their discourse; and others, as it would appear, rising to speak before the former speaker had ceased, from an earnestness to state their knowledge on the subject under discussion. The Apostle informed them, ver 31, that “they might all prophecy, one by one, that all might learn, and all might be comforted.” But though they might all speak *by course*, they were not thence allowed to infer that every one of them might use this liberty at one time of assembling; for, at one meeting, it was not proper that more than *two or three* should address the believers. And Paul enforces the propriety of his directions by telling them that “God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all the congregations of the saints.” That this duty and privilege of speaking “to edification and comfort” belongs to all the male members is plain, not only from the generality of the expression, “Ye may all prophecy,” but from what he adds respecting the females, ver. 34, “Let your women keep silence in your assemblies, *for it is not permitted unto them to speak*; (plainly implying that *it is permitted unto the men*). If they desire to have information on any point, let them ask their husbands at home; for *it is a shame for women to speak in the congregation.*”

The duty of exhorting one another was not only permitted, but enjoined to be observed, as one of the means appointed by God to enable believers to “hold fast the profession of the faith without wavering.” For this end the believing Hebrews, Heb. x. 24, 25, are admonished “to provoke one another to love and to good works, not forsaking the assembling of themselves together, but exhorting one another,” viz., in their public assemblies. The congregation of the Thessalonians are desired, 1 Thess. iv. 18, “to comfort one another,” with what Paul had stated to them respecting “the second coming of Christ;” and “the saints and faithful brethren” at Colosse are enjoined, Col. iii. 16, to “Let the word of Christ dwell in them richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns, and spiritual songs;” a passage which shows the meaning of the one before quoted from the Epistle to the Corinthians, all of whom had a *psalm or a doctrine* for the instruction of the congregation.

Without insisting farther on this point, it must follow, from what has been produced, that the bishops were *entitled to receive instruction* from, as well as bound to *communicate it* to, the congregation;

that ev
ledge v
that it
iv. 10,
one to
speakin
speakin
things,
Eph. iv

As it
congreg
upont
after inf
interces
ver. 8,
everywh
That the
will that
the origi
trast wit
in silenc
Apostle,
up the p
that this
to speak
xiv. 34,

* It app
Theoctistu
which was
as the offic
of speaking
gone into
Demetrius,
Theoctistu
was never
bishops, yo
are able to
preach unt
and Paulini
most blesse

† As exp
confusion in
siding elder
at any time
when not th

No, but their
 es when there
 e congregation
 would appear,
 om an earnest-
 cussion. The
 prophecy, one
 fortified." But
 ence allowed
 at one time of
 at more than
 enforces the
 not the author
 f the saints."
 and comfort"
 the generality
 what he adds
 ep silence in
 eak; (plainly
 desire to have
 at home; for
 permitted, but
 ed by God to
 faith without
 x. 24, 25, are
 od works, not
 exhorting one
 egation of the
 one another,"
 ond coming of
 are enjoined,
 a richly in all
 is and hymns,
 ng of the one
 whom had a
 n.
 w, from what
 eceive instruc-
 congregation;

that every individual had a right to receive the benefit of that knowledge which God had communicated to every other member; and that it was incumbent on all of them, as expressed by Peter, 1 Ep. iv. 10, "according as they had received the gift, to minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God"—speaking agreeably to his oracles—not seeking to please men, "but speaking the truth in love, that they might grow up unto him in all things, who is *the Head—the Anointed*—edifying the body in love," Eph. iv. 15, 16.*

As it belonged to every male member to teach and to exhort the congregation, so also it is evident any male member might be called upon to be the mouth of the assembly in prayer to God; for Paul, after informing Timothy, 1 Ep. ii., what sort of supplications and intercessions should be offered up for kings and magistrates, proceeds, ver. 8, to mention by whom:—"I will, therefore, that *men pray* everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting." That the word *men* is not here put for *believers*, as if he had said, "I will that disciples pray everywhere," is evident, for it is preceded in the original by the article; and *the men (tous andras)* are put in contrast with *the women*, in the verses that follow—"Let *the women* learn in silence—I suffer not a *woman* to teach but to be in silence." The Apostle, in short, after enjoining that the male members were to offer up the prayers of the congregation, reminds them by the latter words that this could not be done by females, since they were not permitted to speak, but commanded to keep silence in the assemblies, 1 Cor. xiv. 34, 35. Nor is it possible to assign any other meaning to the

* It appears plainly by the letter of Alexander, bishop of Jerusalem, and Theoctistus, of Cæsarea, to Demetrius, bishop of Alexandria, that in their time, which was that of Origen, the custom had not yet become general, for *the clergy*, as the office-bearers came through time to be called, to monopolise the privilege of speaking in the congregation. Origen, before he was called into office, having gone into Palestine, had, by desire of the bishops, preached there; at this Demetrius, when he learnt it, took offence, on which occasion Alexander and Theoctistus wrote to him as follows:—"Whereas you say, in your letter, that it was never before seen or practised, that laymen should preach in the presence of bishops, you therein deviate from the truth; for, whosoever any are found that are able to profit the brethren, the holy bishops, of their own accord, ask them to preach unto the people. EVELPIS was thus desired by Neon, bishop of Laranda, and Paulinus by Celsus, of Iconium, and Theodoros by Atticus, of Synnada, our most blessed brethren."—*Euseb. lib. vi. cap. 19.*

† As express injunctions are given to the Corinthians to avoid every kind of confusion in their public assemblies, and as it was the special province of the presiding elder to see that this was attended to, we may infer that the person who at any time acted as the mouth of the congregation in this particular service, when not the presiding elder himself, would be one called up at the time by him.

words, as they stand in the original, unless we affirm that men are commanded *to pray everywhere*, but women *to pray nowhere*. The term *everywhere*, or *in every place*, when connected by the Apostle with what he enjoins as a duty, always alludes to places where Christian congregations were settled; and that what Timothy received as directions to be *everywhere* attended to, was communicated by him to every congregation which he visited, appears irrefragably from what Paul himself says to the Corinthians, 1 Ep. iv. 17, respecting this very Timothy, and the instructions he gave him:—"I beseech you, be ye followers of me. For this cause have I sent unto you Timothy, my beloved son and faithful in the Lord, who shall bring you into remembrance of my ways which be in Christ, as I teach *everywhere in every congregation*."

SECTION VIII.—*Of the Liberality enjoined to be practised by Christian Assemblies.*

On the first day of the week. Christian congregations had another duty to perform besides those already mentioned—to make a *collection for the saints*. Concerning this duty, an Apostle speaks thus to the Corinthians:—"Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him, putting into the treasury (or public stock) according as he has prospered," 1 Cor. xvi. 2. From the extent given to the performance of this duty, it is plain that the complete and perfect independence of the respective congregations, with regard to the management of their own concerns, was never allowed to suffer them to disregard each other's welfare. The law of love enjoined by their Master, and enforced and illustrated by the Apostles, inculcated a very different spirit. The individual members of every church were taught to "love every believer for the truth's sake"—not to "love in word, neither in tongue, but in deed and in truth.—But whoso hath this world's goods, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?" Their love was not to consist in that unmeaning jargon, which is but too common—"I am heartily sorry for you: I hope things will take a better turn"—"Depart in peace, be warmed and filled," while they yet withhold contributions of primary necessity. They knew, by the teaching of "the Spirit of God," that without love to their brother, manifested in real and substantial acts of mercy, they could give no true evidence of their faith; and that "he that loveth

not his
This la
Chris
tributio
Those
tribute
tion of
equality
another
These
contribu
the per
produce
truth—
was rich
poverty
a rate, v
ing stand
alms-givi
doeth;"
accordin
strait, f
sparingl
shall rea
will not
fear that
love cast
made per
every me
ful to w
donations
things ha
Rom. xii
God give
"who ha

• I wish
Christ, not
employ no
brethren th
would now
Divine trut

not his brother abideth in death," James ii. 15, 1 John iii. 14, &c. This law of love, by the observance of which the real disciples of Christ may be known by all men, was not to be confined, in the distribution of the benefits resulting from it, to "*my own church*." Those congregations which were more affluent were enjoined to contribute to the support of those assemblies which had a greater proportion of poor members, that in this respect there might be a kind of equality; the abundance of one furnishing a supply for the wants of another, that the burden might be equally divided, 2 Cor. viii. ix. These Christians required no assessment to apportion the quota to be contributed by each member, nor were any means employed to enforce the performance of this duty, but that powerful argument, which alone produces obedience in those who live under the influence of the truth—"Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich." These alms, so far from being collected by a rate, were perfectly voluntary.* Indeed, any system of apportioning stands directly opposed to the lesson taught by Christ respecting almsgiving—"Let not your right hand know what the left hand doeth;" and therefore the Apostle exhorts, "Let each man give according as he purposeth in his heart, not grudgingly, or of constraint, for God loveth a cheerful giver: but this I say, he that soweth sparingly, shall reap also sparingly; and he that soweth bountifully, shall reap also bountifully." He that believes what Paul here asserts, will not avoid the performance of this duty of love from a tormenting fear that he may, at some future time, be in want himself: "Perfect love casteth out every fear" of this kind; "he that feareth is not made perfect in love." But, while this liberality is thus enforced by every motive that can influence a child of God, the Apostles are careful to warn those whom they address, to be disinterested in their donations: "to owe no man anything," Rom. xiii. 8; "to provide things honest in the sight of all men; to be diligent in business," Rom. xii. 11, 17; "ministering only according to the ability which God giveth, that God in all things may be glorified," 1 Pet. iv. 11; "who hateth robbery for burnt-offering," Isa. lxi. 8.

* I wish not to be misunderstood. I am here speaking of the churches of *Christ*, not of the churches of *this world*. If the rulers of the earth were to employ *no other argument* to collect a fund for the maintenance of their indigent brethren than the only one that was necessary among the Apostolic churches, or would now be necessary in churches collected under the same influence of the Divine truth, I fear their poor would in many instances be left to perish.

These free-will offerings, besides serving to furnish supplies to the necessitous, were also, as we have seen, applied to the support of the female servants of the congregations, who were so exclusively employed in nursing and attending the sick members, that they had not leisure to provide for their own wants. Nor was this maintenance given to them in *forma pauperis*; for, in fact, these matrons gave a greater display of love and affection to the cause of their Master, in thus ministering to his members when "sick and in prison," and attending continually on duties which required such self-denied labour and patience, than the congregations could possibly remunerate by this proof of love, which, however cheerfully bestowed, was, after all, only the payment of a just debt.

The bounty of the congregations was also employed in supplying such deficiencies in the incomes of their bishops as their attendance to the duties of their office might occasion. This, on the part of the members, was not a favour, though paid from the voluntary contributions, but was expressly enjoined as a duty and a debt. "Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine."—To confine this honour to mere expressions of respect, would as little answer the intention of this command, as telling a man to be filled would satisfy his hunger. Indeed, the Apostle shows that he was not here enjoining idle compliments, which would cost the donor nothing, for he adds, as a reason for the performance of this duty, "The Scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn; and, the labourer is worthy of his reward," 1 Tim. v. 17, 18. Here we see that the congregations were bound not only to pay attention to the comfort of their presbyters generally, but, noticing their individual labours, to endeavour to form such a correct estimate of the sacrifice of time made by each, as to prevent them from suffering by their own modesty. It might naturally be supposed, that some would be more zealous, and labour more assiduously than others, and that, in the common course of human affairs, some would be less able than others to afford from their own concerns that portion of time engrossed by the duties of their office; and hence the propriety and necessity of the congregation, or rather its deacons, paying particular attention to what is here enjoined by the Apostle. On the other hand, the overseers, notwithstanding this injunction given to the flock respecting them, were commanded not to become unnecessarily burdensome, through a covetous disposition making a profit of their office, accord-

ing to th
Paul, in
sus (Act
man's g
have mi
I have s
support
who said

In the
jurisdiction
proceedin
and that
the New
is the lav
flocks, in
way of t
designed
often a re
the transg
tion on th
until sever
the parab
ideas. T
this law,
Apostles,
gathered t
them that
orderly,"
filthiness o
2 Cor. vii.
—20,—"
fault betw
gained thy
two more,
may be es
the congre
him be un

ing to the practice of men of the world, "counting gain godliness," Paul, in his exhortation to the bishops of the congregation at Ephesus (Acts xx.), is express upon this point:—"I have coveted no man's gold, or apparel. Yea, yourselves know, that these hands have ministered unto my necessities and to those that were with me. I have showed you in all things, how that, *so labouring, ye ought to support the infirm*; and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, who said, *It is more blessed to give than to receive.*"

SECTION IX.—Of Discipline.

In the nature of things, any society that is independent of all foreign jurisdiction, must have a code of laws, by which, in every case, its proceedings may be governed, and its conduct towards its members, and that of the members to each other, regulated. Such a code is the New Testament to Christian congregations.—Among its contents is the law of the Great Shepherd of the sheep, for the guidance of his flocks, in cases where any of their number should go astray from the way of that "holiness becoming the house of God;"—which, being designed for the recovery of transgressors, neither sets limits as to how often a repenting transgressor is to be forgiven, nor as to the nature of the transgression; for the answer which Peter received to his question on the occasion, "I say not unto thee, until seven times, but until seventy times seven," and the *debt of ten thousand talents*, in the parable immediately following, are plainly opposed to any such ideas. The same volume also contains examples in the practice of this law, and directions for following it, under the pens of the inspired Apostles, occasioned by the things which occurred among the flocks gathered together by their ministry; and so they exhort to "warn them that are unruly," 1 Thess. v. 14; to "withdraw from the disorderly," 2 Thess. iii. 6, 14; and to "cleanse themselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God," 2 Cor. vii. 1. All of which refer to the Lord's rule, Matt. xviii. 15—20,—"*If thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear, take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the congregation; but if he shall neglect to hear the congregation, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican.* Verily I say

unto thee, whatsoever ye shall bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. Again, I say unto you, that if two of you shall agree on earth, as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father who is in heaven. For where two or three are assembled in my name, there am I in the midst of them." This rule is so plain, that by no possibility whatever can its import be mistaken by the followers of Christ. No congregation, however small, is permitted to disregard it. Should their number be only *two* or *three*, they are bound to attend to it. If the smallness of the congregation does not exempt the members from the obligation of this law, neither can the greatness of its numbers. Those who affirm that it is impossible to be observed in the church to which they belong, may probably speak truth; but this only proves that they belong to some church of which Christ, the Shepherd and Bishop, is not the head; for "his sheep hear his voice and follow him," John x. 4; and he counts only those his friends "who do whatsoever he commands them," John xv. 14.

How admirably is this law calculated to make the believers of the truth live together in harmony, and to banish every thing contrary to that character, which the followers of the meek and lowly Jesus ought to maintain. To enumerate here every thing that it embraces, would be to transcribe a great part of the New Testament. Every breach of the laws of Christ—every neglect of the duties of the members to each other, to their relatives and connections, to the world in general, and to the government under which they live and enjoy protection, is to be corrected by a strict attendance to this precept.*

The injunction given to the Israelites (Lev. xix. 17), "Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart; thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbour, and not suffer sin upon him," is commanded to be strictly observed under the New Dispensation. To suffer sin upon a

* Considering the comprehensive view of the law of Christ's kingdom, here taken by Biblicus, as according to truth, a small deviation from his words was deemed necessary in the beginning of the Section (*preceding page*), because they conveyed rather a confined idea of this law, introducing it as a mode of procedure for offences of a less public nature. It is plain that, in following this law, every offence which can be settled privately will be so; but, it seems also plain, that no offence of which it becomes necessary to acquaint the congregation, can afterwards be fully settled in any private way; and that, of course, no offence committed publicly, or which becomes publicly known, can be properly settled any where but in the congregation; yet still this law is their guide: if the offender hear admonition and acknowledge the error of his way he is gained: if he will not hear, he is to be accounted as a heathen man and a publican—excluded from all fellowship.

brother
brother
pretend
God gi
brother
brother
God, he
says, "

Thos
now spe
they do
as "the
hell," I
kingdom
that they
go down
dignation
an enem
they can
out to hi
with the
is a kind
my head,

When
Christ's a
he will no
sidering h
tion, migh
Master, h
sion.—"I
Should he
fore he ap
and the ot
violating t

If the of
able to rec
more than
make him
for healing
duty !—It

brother, is to hate him!—and we know that whosoever “hateth his brother is a murderer,” 1 John iii. 15. Let a person find as many pretences as he will for neglecting so plain a precept, the word of God gives him this reply: “If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar,” 1 John iv. 20. If he neglect to admonish his brother, when he sees him violate or disregard any of the laws of God, he becomes a partaker in the crime of Cain, and by his conduct says, “Am I my brother’s keeper?”

Those who acknowledge Christ as their Master, and of such only I now speak, know that it is vain to call him “Master, Master!” while they do not the things that he says,” Luke vi. 46; and all such will, as “they fear him who, when he hath killed, hath power to cast into hell,” Luke xii. 5, pay obedience to this indispensable law of his kingdom. If a brother offend, they will “feel anger at the offence, that they may avoid sin,” and will endeavour, even “before the sun go down,” to convince him of his error, Eph. iv. 26. But their indignation is against the sin only. The offender they consider “not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother,” 2 Thess. iii. 15; and they cannot give him a stronger proof of their love than by pointing out to him, in the spirit of meekness, the inconsistency of his conduct with the profession of a Christian.—“Let the righteous smite me; it is a kindness;—let him reprove me; this precious oil will not wound my head,” Psalm cxli. 5.

When a disciple is offended, which he cannot but be when he sees Christ’s authority or laws disregarded by one who is called a brother, he will not instantly proclaim to others his brother’s fault; but, considering how possible it is that he himself, if exposed to the temptation, might also offend, Gal. vi. 1, and attending to the law of his Master, he will apply to his brother *alone*, to show him his transgression.—“If his brother repent, he will forgive him,” Luke xvii. 3. Should he follow a different conduct, and tell the fault to another before he applies to his brother, he himself would thus be a transgressor, and the other party would be bound to show him his own fault in violating this law.

If the offended brother has done his duty, but without having been able to reclaim the transgressor, he is then bound to take one, and not more than two witnesses, and with their assistance again endeavour to make him sensible of his crime. How admirably is this law adapted for healing all breaches and restoring the lapsed to a sense of their duty!—It is the voice of Him “who spake as never man spake.”

It is possible a man may be offended without cause—he may chauce to lie under some false impression—to have taken a wrong view of his brother's conduct—to mistake human ordinances for the laws of Christ. By following out this law, if he be in an error, he is himself corrected; and if his manner of reproof has tended to irritate his brother and to widen the breach, the witnesses will endeavour to bring both to a proper temper, and the real offender to a sense of his duty as a Christian.

Should the offender turn a deaf ear to the charitable admonitions of his brethren, still they are to avoid proclaiming his offence to the world. They are then to "tell it to the congregation," and the steps they have taken to reclaim him. Here is another security that the individual who is accused shall not suffer in his character, by the intemperate haste of two or three individuals, who may be all in the wrong;—and, on the other hand, that they shall not be slandered as false accusers of their brother, and as having injured his reputation, while their conduct towards him has been dictated by a Christian spirit. The congregation will then ask direction of "their Father who is in heaven," imploring the presence of Him who has promised to be with them when they are assembled in his name, that they may know his will as revealed in his word, (for they never look for any other revelation,) attend to it without prejudice, and do nothing by partiality, 1 Tim. v. 21—seeking only the good of their brother and of one another, and the honour of their common Master.

If the charge be proved well founded, and the offender continue to shut his ear against reproof and admonition, and instead of "confessing and forsaking the evil of his way, as one that hath found mercy," appear cleaving to it, the duty of the congregation is, to separate him from their fellowship; for they are commanded (1 Cor. v. 11) "not to keep company with *any man* that is called a brother, if he be a *fornicator*, or *covetous*, or a *worshipper of idols*, or a *railer*, or a *drunkard*, or *rapacious*:"* with such an one not even to eat—(ver. 5)—to deliver such an one unto satan, for the destruction of the flesh." That is, he is to be counted still "dead in trespasses and sins," walk-

* Does not the Apostle specify these characters as *all equally* descriptive of a person dead in trespasses and sins? and should they not be always so considered by Christians, in obeying his command? Should the covetous man be more indulged than the fornicator?—But a man may be overtaken in a fault under any of these heads, and yet abhor the deed and himself as having committed it. In such a case, surely the offender under one of them is not more beyond forgiveness than the offender under another.

ing "
the p
disobe
be acc
the oth
spirit
necess
afflict
limb, c
of ano
see the
to "fo
over m
As
whole
admoni
him, w
from it
verdict
receive
6—10.
that co
and in
nounce
act, nei
the who
by pers
objects
against
thing ca
be the u
who ca
voluntar
among th

SECTION
ance
Sovere

The e

ing "according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience," Eph. ii. 1, 2, 3. This procedure, however, is not to be accompanied with any thing like a vindictive spirit on the part of the other members, but with real affection to the offender, "that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus." In fact, the necessity of separating a brother will be to them a subject of great affliction and sorrow. It is compared (Matt. xviii.) to "cutting off a limb, or plucking out an eye;" for all are considered as members one of another, Eph. iv. 25; and therefore they will rejoice when they see the transgressor brought to a sense of his guilt, and will be ready to "forgive and comfort him, that he may not be swallowed up with over much sorrow," 2 Cor. ii. 7.

As every subject of discipline must come ultimately *before the whole congregation*, if the offender refuses to listen to the more private admonitions of his brethren, so the sentence determined on respecting him, whether to be forgiven, if he hears its reproof, or to be expelled from its society, *must be the sentence of all*; as must also be the verdict, by which, on his afterwards showing his penitence, he is again received into fellowship. (Compare I Cor. v. 4, 5, with 2 Cor. ii. 6—10.) The congregation must, in such cases, as in every thing else that concerns them, "be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment," 1 Cor. i. 10. The sentence, though pronounced by one of the presbytery belonging to the congregation, is the act, neither of the individual elder, nor of the presbytery, but that of the whole body. The offender cannot harden himself in his iniquity, by persuading himself that only this or that member or office-bearer objects to his conduct and character. Here is no room left for spleen against those who deliver the judgment—it is the act of all, and if anything can tend to bring the transgressor to a sense of his guilt, it must be the unanimous detestation of his crime, expressed by a body of men who can be influenced by no earthly motive, and all of whom voluntarily submit to the discipline, that they may "purge out from among them the leaven of malice and wickedness," 1 Cor. v. 6, 8.

SECTION X.—Of the end intended to be gained by a strict observance of the Laws of Christ among his Followers.—Of Christ's Sovereignty.

The end intended to be gained by the doctrine, order, and dis-

cipline, appointed to be maintained in Christian congregations, is, that the body of Christ may be edified "till we all come, in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to complete manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: that we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro by every wind of doctrine, by men versed in slight and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive: but speaking the truth in love, may grow up unto him in all things, who is the Head—the Anointed; from whom the whole body fitly joined together, and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love," Eph. iv. 13—16. For this end everything that concerns the faith and morals of the members will be strictly observed in every church of Christ; nor will they dare to divide his laws into *essentials* and *non-essentials*,* or presume to alter their meaning and import in the smallest degree, under any pretext whatever. His kingdom is not of this world, and therefore no change of circumstances in the world can alter or take away the obligation imposed upon his followers to observe all things that he has commanded.

As the kingdom of Christ is not of a worldly nature, it becomes impossible for *his* church (whatever Antichristian bodies may do) to attempt to combine it with the world, or to aim at sharing in that dominion which belongs only to the civil magistrate. On the contrary, his people are commanded, Tit. iii. 1, "to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates—showing all meekness unto all men;" and, 1 Pet. ii. 13, "to submit themselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme, or unto governors, as sent by him for the punishment of evil doers, and for the praise of them that do well. For such is the will of God, that by well doing they may silence the ignorance of foolish men: as free, but not using this freedom for a cloak of mischief, but as servants of God: respectful to all, loving the brethren, fearing God, honouring the king." Nor is this subjection and obedience enjoined only on what, in the world, is called the lower orders. None are permitted to assume lordship and dominion in the congregations, and none of their members, as such, dare to endeavour to establish it over the rulers of the world. "Let every soul be subject unto the *higher powers*; for there

* This would be setting their own wisdom above that of their Master, and imitating the reasoning of the Old Serpent—the native consequences of which would be, dissension, strife, and division.

is no
Whos
God
from
action
on acc
accou
their v
dues;
reverer
In sh
and sub
mands
over all
not men
justify a
power;
"not to
cuted in
minions
the state
every p
resisting
openly,"
"uncond
now do
themselves
10, 11,
judged: t
For, if I b
I refuse
they accur
Cæsar."
In ever
have a rig
but, in wh
is not of t
his authori
Christ, with
As this is a

is no power but of God : the existing powers are appointed by God. Whosoever, therefore, resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God ; and they that resist shall bring upon themselves condemnation *from the powers* ; for rulers are not a terror to good but to wicked actions. Wherefore, it is necessary ye be in subjection, not merely on account of punishment, but also for conscience sake : for on this account ye pay tribute also, because they are God's servants, giving their whole time to this very business. Render, therefore, to all their dues ; tribute to whom tribute is due ; custom to whom custom ; reverence to whom reverence ; honour to whom honour," Rom. iii.

In short, on no pretext whatever, dare Christians refuse obedience and subjection to the civil magistrate, excepting only when his commands stand in opposition to the laws of Him who is exalted head over all things. In every such case "we are bound to obey God and not men," Acts v. 29. Nor will even abuse, insult, and persecution, justify a Christian in exciting tumult or sedition against the ruling power ; for by the law of the Master whom he serves, he is bound, "not to render evil for evil, or railing for railing ; but, when persecuted in one place, to flee to another," Matt. x. 23. But when the minions of power exceed their authority, and, contrary to the laws of the state, insult and oppress a Christian, he is justified in pleading every privilege which these laws confer on him ;—for this is not *resisting the power*, but submitting to it. "They have beaten us openly," said Paul of the magistrates of Philippi, Acts xvi. 37, "uncondemned, being Romans, and have cast us into prison ; and now do they thrust us out privily ! nay, verily ; but let them come themselves and fetch us out." And again, before Festus, Acts xxv. 10, 11, "I stand at Cæsar's judgment seat, where I ought to be judged : to the Jews I have done no wrong, as you very well know. For, if I be an offender, or have committed anything worthy of death, I refuse not to die : but if there is nothing in these things of which they accuse me, no man may deliver me unto them. I appeal unto Cæsar."

In everything that respects their privileges, as citizens, Christians have a right to appeal to the laws of the state under which they live ; but, in whatever respects their duty as subjects in that kingdom which is not of this world, they know of no appeal but to him (that is, to his authority) who is the Supreme Lawgiver ; nor can a subject of Christ, without becoming a transgressor, yield obedience to any other. As this is a point of the greatest moment, I cannot conclude my obser-

uations on the *order and discipline of the primitive churches*, without bringing to the recollection of the reader how positively the Scriptures speak of "the Sovereignty of God's Messiah."

It is not my intention, however, to dwell on passages that might be quoted to prove, generally, that *all power* is given unto him, since every one who professes Christianity is ready, in words at least, to admit it. My aim is to show that he is the sole legislator in his kingdom; and that, his laws having been promulgated by his Apostles, nothing can, with impunity, be added to, or taken from them.

It is testified of Moses, Num. xii. 7, that in everything that regarded God's house he was faithful—that is, he conscientiously and implicitly delivered unto the ancient "people of God" those things which he was commanded to declare unto the children of Israel, adding nothing to them, concealing nothing. The inference which the Apostle to the Hebrews draws from this fact is remarkably striking, Heb. iii. Was Moses faithful to him that appointed him? So was "the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus," to Him that appointed him to that high office. Was Moses, who delivered everything that concerned the order and constitution of God's ancient house, worthy to be honoured and obeyed as a legislator? Christ is counted worthy of more honour than he, as he who builds the house (or family) is more to be honoured than the house or servant in it, however faithful that servant may be; for Moses was in fact but a servant, to testify to the people what he was commanded to speak; but Christ governs his own house in quality of "Son and Heir." Wherefore the Holy Spirit saith "Hear *his voice*: harden not your hearts, as the children of Israel did in the wilderness." Such is the sum of the Apostle's reasoning, to show the necessity of Christians submitting implicitly to Him "by whom God hath in these last days spoken unto us; even his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds," Heb. i. 2. The whole scope of the first nine chapters of the Epistle to the Hebrews is to show the greatness and perfections of the character and work of the "High Priest after the order of Melchisedec," vi. 20, who is now "set over the house of God," x. 21; and in chap. x. 28, he draws the inference which the whole suggests:—"He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses; of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the purification wherewith he was set apart (to his office) common, and hath done despite to the

spirit
mine.
argum
the Ne
merely
settling
those w
him wi
the Son
indignat
therefor
the natur
tion, ord
namely,
choosing
for conf
which th
Lord, and
duct he p
easily ass
obedience
believing
them, look
though yet
they may
that father
takers. T
weight of a
expose a m
but grievous
peaceable fr
Wherefore,
and make st
of the way, b
ence to him
the *New*, as
In all thes
ment; and a
New Dispens
Moses, so he

spirit of grace! For we know him that hath said, Vengeance is mine, I will recompence, saith the Lord." In short, the Apostle's argument amounts to this:—Those who believe in Christ, the head of the New Dispensation, will maintain that he has been faithful, not merely as a servant like Moses, but as the heir and rightful owner, in settling and arranging everything that respects his own house; that those who presume to alter his institutions, or to add to them, charge him with having been less faithful than Moses, "trample under foot the Son of God," and expose themselves to that "judgment and fiery indignation which shall devour the adversaries of his reign." And therefore he proceeds to show, by many examples, ch. xi., what is the natural and proper effect of that faith which admits any dispensation, ordinance, or promise, old or new, to have God for its author:—namely, that those who have that conviction will yield obedience, choosing, with Moses, rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, for conforming with his revealed will, than to enjoy any advantage which the world can offer them as a reward for rebelling against the Lord, and yielding obedience to another. The contrary of this conduct he points out, ch. xii., as the sin by which the Christian is most easily assailed, through the persecution and ill treatment to which obedience exposes him in this world; and therefore he exhorts the believing Hebrews "to run with patience the race that is set before them, looking to Jesus, the author and finisher of the things hoped for, though yet unseen"—counting all the afflictions and injuries to which they may be exposed by submitting to his authority, as a portion of that fatherly chastisement of which all God's children are made partakers. The Apostle admits all that can be urged respecting the weight of affliction to which this adherence to the laws of Christ may expose a man—"No chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous but grievous;" but he adds, "Nevertheless, afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness, unto them who are exercised thereby. Wherefore, lift up the hands that hang down, and the feeble knees, and make straight paths for your feet, that the lame be not turned out of the way, but rather be healed." What path? What way? Obedience to him, who has faithfully delivered the will of God respecting the *New*, as Moses did concerning the *Old Dispensation*.

In all these twelve chapters, the Apostle pursues the same argument; and as he enforces subjection to Christ, the lawgiver of the *New Dispensation*, as obedience was before required to be yielded to Moses, so he illustrates his meaning by a reference to the words of

Moses, when he delivered the law of God to the children of Israel:—
 Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord, looking diligently, lest any man fail of the grace of God: lest any root of bitterness springing up, trouble you (or rather lest any root of bitterness, as gall, spring up*), and thereby many be defiled." The Apostle quotes here almost literally from the Septuagint, the words of Moses, Deut. xxix. 18, which in our version are rendered, "Lest there should be among you a root that beareth gall and wormwood." To comprehend his meaning, we have only to see what Moses intended by these words, when he employed them; nor is this difficult: Moses had been enumerating to the Israelites all the blessings which would be showered down upon them, if they would hearken diligently unto the voice of God, and observe the commandments that had been enjoined them: he had declared, also, all the curses with which they would undoubtedly be visited, should they not hearken unto the voice of God, as delivered by their lawgiver. All this was stated to them "lest they should turn away from Jehovah their God, to serve the gods of the nations; lest there should be among them a root bearing gall and wormwood—a man who, notwithstanding what had been enjoined by Moses, to whom God bore witness that he was faithful in declaring everything that respected his service, should "bless himself in his heart, saying, I shall have peace though I walk in the imagination of mine own heart."

Now, from the whole tenor of the address of Moses, it appears plainly, that whoever should, before the coming of that Prophet whom God promised to send "like unto Moses," presume to propose any other law than that which he had delivered from God, or dare to alter, under any pretext whatever, any part of the service to be enjoined, would be chargeable with "rebellion against Jehovah."—Every deviation of this kind was considered as *idolatry*—because, instead of following the Divine precepts, those who were guilty of these alterations, were following the *imagination* of their own heart, and setting up another God as effectually as if they worshipped the abominations of the nations, idols of wood and stone, silver and gold:—and all such,

* All the MSS read *enochle, trouble*; but Dr. Mills and other able critics think we should read, with the transposition of a single letter, *en chole*. The words are a quotation from the Seventy, who render Deut. xxix 18, thus: *Me tis estin humin riza ano phuosa en chole kai picra*, lest there spring up among you a root as bitter as gall (literally, in gall and bitterness, by the figure Hendiadys). There can hardly be a doubt, therefore, that we owe the common reading to an error of some early transcriber.

in place
 bringing
 gall and
 them.
 Lawgiver
 his address
 address
 it is no
 to the la
 or to fir
 worship
 reasonin
 pointing
 pious th
 first sho
 Moses,"
 "faithful
 Christian
 positions
 be avoid
 Christi
 diligently
 in spite o
 this, I mi
 Master bu
 —but do
 and shut
 authority i
 house—av
 ing to the
 Having,
 tain, from
 of the kind
 discipline
 ought to be
 inquire by
 the third T
 and corrupt

* Yea, to f
 (Prov. v.) wh

of Israel :—
 which no man
 of the grace of
 you (or rather
 by many be
 the Septuagint,
 are rendered,
 all and worm-
 to see what
 n; nor is this
 all the bless-
 ould hearken
 andments that
 e curses with
 y not hearken
 All this was
 ah their God,
 among them a
 standing what
 s that he was
 ervice, should
 ough I walk

es, it appears
 Prophet whom
 propose any
 or dare to alter,
 be enjoined,
 "—Every de-
 use, instead of
 these altera-
 t, and setting
 abominations
 —and all such,

able critics
 en chole. The
 8, thus: *Me tis*
 g up among you
 are Hendiads).
 n reading to an

in place of being "trees of righteousness, the planting of Jehovah"—bringing forth fruit whereby God may be glorified, were *roots*, bearing gall and wormwood, ready to defile all who had any connection with them. And from the parallel drawn by the Apostle between the Lawgiver of the Old and the Lawgiver of the New Dispensation, and his addressing to Christians the same admonition which Moses had addressed to those to whom the old law was given, it is evident that it is no more left to the former, than it was to the Israelites in regard to the law of Moses, to violate or neglect the laws of Christ's house, or to frame and contrive any thing whatever respecting order and worship, from any motive, however devout; and the Apostle's whole reasoning shows, that any argument which men may produce, for appointing an order and discipline of their own, however plausible and pious they may make it appear, is founded in falsehood, unless they first show that Christ was not the promised "Prophet like unto Moses," (that is, a *lawgiver*), or that he was not, as Moses was, "faithful to him that appointed him." But those who, professing Christianity, attempt *directly* or *indirectly* to establish either of these positions, are roots that bear *gall and wormwood*, and are, therefore, to be avoided.

Christian congregations were warned, as the Israelites were, to look diligently that no root of this kind should spring up among them; but, in spite of the warning, this wormwood poisoned them. In proof of this, I might simply ask, Where are the churches that own no other Master but Christ? There are many professors who say *Lord, Lord!*—but do they do the things he enjoins? Are their ears open to him, and shut to the voice of every stranger? Do they submit to his authority in all things—attending to the order and discipline of his house—avoiding every brother that walketh disorderly, and not according to the precepts that he hath delivered?

Having, in this and the preceding Sections, endeavoured to ascertain, from the Scriptures (the only authority admissible in questions of the kind we have been considering), what were the constitution and discipline of the Apostolic congregations, and consequently what ought to be followed in all ages by the disciples of Christ, I shall next inquire by what means the independent churches, brought to view in the third Trumpet as *rivers and fountains of water*, became so defiled and corrupted as to be compared to *wormwood*.*

* Yes, to fill up the character of the *strange woman*, described by Solomon, (Prov. v.) whose end is *bitter as wormwood*;—in opposition to whose most en-

PART II.

Having, in the preceding Part, shown that by the *rivers and fountains of water*, mentioned in the third Trumpet, are meant the Christian churches, in their state of primitive purity and independence, I now proceed to inquire by what means they lost their original character, and became deadly pools, impregnated with *gall* and *wormwood*.

Several causes operated to produce the unhappy change—as “persecution,” Matt. xiii. 21—“corrupt teachers,” Acts xx. 29, 30; 2 Pet. ii. 1—“a dislike to sound doctrine,” 2 Tim. iv. 3—and “a desire to be justified by the law,” Gal. iii. 2—till, at length, “many departed entirely from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of demons; speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their consciences seared with a hot iron,” 1 Tim. iv. 1, 2;—“having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof,” 2 Tim. iii. 15.

All of these causes contributed to destroy the order of the house of God, till, in process of time, it was trodden down entirely* by the Gentiles, at the period when the “great star, burning as it were a lamp, fell from heaven, and fell upon the third part of the rivers and fountains of water,” converting them into deadly poison. It is not my intention to speak particularly on each of these causes. I mean to confine myself, in the following Sections, to those innovations which directly led to the subversion of congregational independence—the evil chiefly pointed at in the third Trumpet.

SECTION I.—*Deviations from the Apostolic practice respecting Converts—Episcopal usurpation in its infancy.*

To attempt to trace, in the order in which they arose, all the corruptions by which the church became debased, would require many

enaring ways, he advises to “drink waters out of thine own cistern, and running waters out of thine own well.

* Some think that the “treading of the Holy City under foot by the Gentiles,” spoken of Rev. xi. 2, does not imply that they were to trample it down in open and determined contempt; but that they were to *tread* it (as the courts of the Lord) and defile it, with their false worship—calling themselves *Christians* while “their vine was the vine of Sodom and of the fields of Gomorrah, their grapes of *gall*, and their clusters *bitter*,” Deut. xxxii. 32—completely filling up the profanity of Israel, whom God by the prophet (Isa. i.) addresses as the rulers of Sodom, and people of Gomorrah; and who are questioned thus, “To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? saith Jehovah . . . When ye come before me, who hath required this at your hands, to *tread my courts*?”

volun
boast
by th
of ap
prove
had b
aside
the s
Head
deny,
precep
We
the gla
the Lo
the chu
right to
over by
fore the
ance of
years fr
vailed.
come C
Catechu
structed
might gi
their live
“private
“to com
selves: a
treating o
and in tin
admitted
tullian cal
the discou
the end
baptised, a
service, or

*
† D

volumes, and more erudition than the author of these Strictures can boast. But this is not necessary: it will be sufficient to show, that by the time the blazing star put the finishing hand to the grand work of apostacy, there remained little of Christianity but the name. To prove this, it need only be shown, that every part of that order which had been appointed by the "Prophet like unto Moses," had been set aside; for, whatever appearance of piety and devotion might exist in the services which were substituted for those enjoined by the only Head of the church, none who attend to the words of Christ will deny, that "that worship and doctrine is vain which is taught by the precept of men," Matt. xv. 9.

We have seen that in the days of the Apostles, "whoever believed the glad tidings" proclaimed by them, and "confessed with the mouth the Lord Jesus," were immediately, by baptism, admitted members of the church; and that, in consequence of this admission, they had a right to every privilege of membership, and were "mutually watched over by each other in love," and stimulated "to run the race set before them with patience; by well doing, putting to silence the ignorance of foolish men." It appears, however, that in less than 200 years from the planting of the first congregations, a new practice prevailed. Origen informs us* that those who expressed a wish to become Christians were obliged first to go through the probation of *Catechumens*, so called, because they were then catechised and instructed in the articles of the Christian faith, that in the interim "they might give evidence of the reality of their intentions, by the change in their lives and the holiness of their conversation." After being thus "privately instructed at home," for some time, they were permitted "to come into the assembly, where they stood as a band by themselves: and were allowed to hear discourses adapted to their capacities, treating of the ordinary and less mysterious truths of Christianity;"—and in time, if their conduct deserved this distinction, "they were admitted to a higher rank," (that of the *perfecti* or *perfect*, as Tertullian calls them,†) who attended not only during the reading and the discourse that followed, but also at the prayers which constituted the end of the first service. In some time after this they were baptised, and remained with the congregation to the end of the second service, or celebration of the eucharist.

* Origen contra Celsum, lib. iii. p. 142, 143, Edit. 4to, 1677.

† De Prescript. advers. Hæret. p. 89. Tertul. Opera. fol. 1580.

When the Messiah came, it was "not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance:"—and when the guilty applied to his Apostles for relief and comfort, in the view of their guilt and wretchedness, we see, from the case of the Jailor, how readily they were granted, Acts xvi. This poor man does not appear to have ever heard anything of the truth, till that very night on which Paul and Silas prayed and sang praises, in the hearing of the prisoners.—When he besought them to tell him what was necessary to his salvation, "Believe (said they) on the Lord Jesus Christ, and *thou* shalt be saved, and *thy house*"—and he and all his were baptised straightway.—What! without becoming a catechumen?—Without any probation of the sincerity of his intentions to become a Christian?—What a reprobate Paul would have been considered among the pretended successors of the Apostles, who held it to be heresy "indifferently to hear and pray with all, making no difference between the faithful and the catechumens,"* and never "initiated any into the holy mysteries till they had made a proficiency in holiness, and to the utmost of their power reformed their conversation;"†—for, if we may believe Tertullian, (*De Penitentia*, p. 379.) "Christians were not (in his time) baptised that they might cease from sin, but because they had already ceased!"

If such was the method now followed in admitting members, we may be certain the congregations had also undergone some alterations with respect to their office-bearers. The simple order appointed by the Apostles would soon be found altogether unsuitable for such enlightened churches! Accordingly, it appears that they soon began to divide the elder or bishop's office, which, in the days of the Apostles, was one, into two distinct offices—bishops and presbyters;—and having once presumed in this manner to encroach on Christ's prerogative, it was no wonder that, in process of time, they introduced different degrees of their orders, as well as of deacons, with numerous new offices that never entered into the contemplation of the Apostles. The first writer, who mentions bishops, presbyters, and deacons, as three distinct offices in the church, is Ignatius, bishop of Antioch, who is supposed to have written about the sixteenth year of the 2nd century. It is true, several of the Epistles which bear his name are acknowledged by critics of all denominations, to be forgeries, and others are admitted even by his ablest advocates to be interpolated;

* Tertul. de Prescript. advers. Hæret. p. 88.

† Origen contra Celsum. lib. iii. p. 147.

but
has
the
diffe
abou
frequ
but
ent
disting
gree
same
of bis
the t
servin
shoul
mean
bisho
(*Stro*
presby
the su
the dis
consid
and p
or cur
in grad
peculia
or imag
in time
tained

* The
beyond
exhorts
(c. vi.)
Polycarp
bishops
that such
† In the
semicirc
was elev
pellation
his time
order.

† Epis
69 § 5.

but this affects not my present argument, for whether he wrote what has been ascribed to him, or his name was borrowed afterwards to the innovation, the fact remains the same as to the new practice, differing only as to the time of its introduction.* Ireneus, who wrote about the middle of the second century, or perhaps a few years after, frequently employs the names *bishops* and *presbyters* indiscriminately; but critics are not agreed whether he does not sometimes mean different orders by these terms. It seems probable that in his time the distinction, though not yet general, was beginning to prevail as to degree; for Clemens Alexandrinus, who wrote about the end of the same century, though he mentions (*Stromat.* lib. vi.) "the processes of bishops, presbyters, and deacons"—makes no distinction between the two former as to *order*, though he plainly does as to *degree*, observing that to be a presbyter it is not necessary that the individual should occupy the *protocathedra*, or first seat in the presbytery,† meaning only that the seat belonged to the presiding presbyter, the bishop, for where he speaks of orders among the office-bearers, (*Stromat.* lib. i.) he names but two, thus, "In the congregation the presbyters are entrusted with the dignified ministry, the deacons with the subordinate." By the middle of the following century, however, the distinction prevailed generally; the presiding elder came to be considered as the bishop, pastor, president, governor, superintendant, and priest,‡ and the rest to be regarded only as his assistants, vicars, or curates, who acted under his direction. This change, which came in gradually, began by application of the former and similar titles, in a peculiar manner, to him who presided; but it was not at first intended or imagined that it would lead to the consequences that followed; yet in time they were applied to him exclusively, and the churches obtained a bishop each instead of bishops, and presbyters who were no

* That no distinction of this kind was known in the days of Ignatius, seems beyond all question, from the Epistle of Polycarp to the Philippians, in which he exhorts the brethren (c. v.) to be "subject to the presbyters and deacons;" and (c. vi.) the "presbyters to be compassionate and merciful towards all." If Polycarp, a contemporary of Ignatius, and who survived him, knew nothing of bishops as distinguished from presbyters, will it be believed that Ignatius did, or that such an opinion was then held?

† In these ancient congregations the presbytery sat on a seat in the form of a semicircle. The presiding elder sat at the head of the semicircle, and his seat was elevated a little above those of his *colleagues*. Even Cyprian gives that appellation to the presbyters, calling them *collegis meis*; (Ep. 28. § 2.) so that in his time, the difference between bishop and elder was only in degree, not in order.

‡ *Episcopus, præpositus, pastor, gubernator, antistes, sacerdos.*—Cyprian, Ep. 69 § 5.

longer bishops, and who, consequently, filled some office not known to the Apostles, though they still preserved the name of an office instituted by them.

As every individual congregation still continued to have a bishop of its own, so for some time after this period each bishop had one congregation only; the district was called his parish (*paroichia*). This word signifies simply *dwelling, sojourning*. It means, strictly, a temporary residence, and was therefore very appropriately applied to those who confessed that they were "strangers and pilgrims on the earth," Acts xiii. 17, 1 Pet. i. 1 and 17; and, as used at first, had reference to the congregation more than to the bishop—meaning those who, having their residence, dwelling, or habitation, in the same vicinage, were members of the same congregation. Thus the Epistle of Clemens Romanus is "to the congregation of God *dwelling* (*paroichouse, parishing*) at Corinth," and the congregation at Smyrna wrote to "the congregation *parishing* at Philomelium." But the word soon changed its original meaning, and, before the end of the third century, it is common in Eusebius* to read of the bishop of the *parish* of Alexandria, of the *parish* of Corinth, of Ephesus, of Athens, &c.

These bishops, who had thus acquired a new power, by usurping dominion over their fellow presbyters in the same congregation, dreamed not of the consequences to which this might lead them. The possibility that the bishops of particular congregations might arrogate to themselves a precedence, and, eventually, a right to domineer over those of other congregations, seems never once to have entered their mind, when they were busy in establishing their own undivided power, though it might easily have been foreseen that the one encroachment was calculated to produce the other. All the congregations as yet remained perfectly independent, every one conducting its own discipline, and managing its affairs without any foreign interference whatever. But the authority of Christ having been so grossly violated respecting the admission of members, and the appointment of office-bearers, need we wonder that this passion for rule should produce a desire in some of the bishops to encroach on this independence, by claiming authority over the neighbouring congregations? In principle, this differed not at all from what had already been practised, in setting themselves over their colleagues in their individual congrega-

* Euseb. lib. iv. cap. xv.

tions
bisho
Cart
coun
fellow
at or
woul
farthe
promi
inquin

SECT

The
conver
planted
glad n
gated,
conver
of belie
general
gations
distance
only of
bouring
of an e
were ve
continua
and over
looking c
of believ
parts of
convenie
distinct c

* Not th
two or thr
in attendin
the Spirit,
wherever th
tion of the

tions; and, to such men, it would appear just as reasonable that the bishop of a large, wealthy, and populous city, such as Antioch, Rome, Carthage, or Alexandria, should have power over the bishops of the county parishes, as that the latter should have authority over their fellow bishops in their own parish. This, however, was not attempted at once, but was gradually introduced. At this distance of time, it would be difficult to trace with precision all the steps by which this farther change was effected; but the principal circumstances are so prominent as to press themselves on the view of an unprejudiced inquirer. To these I shall devote the next Section.

SECTION II.—*Farther Progress of Ecclesiastical Tyranny.—Nature of the Means Employed to Establish it.*

The Apostles, as we have seen, appointed the first fruits of their conversions as bishops and deacons over the churches which they planted in the various towns and countries where they proclaimed *the glad news of the reign of God*. As the truth continued to be propagated, new congregations were established in other places, and new converts were added to those already established. But the number of believers in any quarter was small, compared with that of the general population, and, of course, in the country places, the congregations were formed of members who often resided at a considerable distance from each other, while the church in each city consisted, not only of the believers in that place, but of those residing in the neighbouring district. In other words, as it often required* the believers of an extended track to form a congregation, some of the *parishes* were very considerable. While the presbytery of each congregation continued in the spirit of the primitive institution, to feed their flocks and oversee them, "not for filthy lucre, but as ensamples to the flock," looking only to futurity for their reward, in proportion as the number of believers increased in an extensive parish, the disciples in different parts of it, whenever a number sufficient for the purpose could most conveniently assemble, put themselves in the appointed order as a distinct congregation, and elected elders of their own, who were set

* Not that a large number is absolutely requisite; for, as before noticed, even *two or three, congregated* in the name of Jesus, are assured of his countenance in attending to his commandments; but the comforts of love, and fellowship of the Spirit, would lead as many to assemble together as possible, particularly wherever they could have the advantage of the order appointed for the edification of the body; and a congregation in this order is here spoken of.

apart to their office by the imposition of the hands of the elders of the neighbouring congregations. The convenience of the believers was thus consulted, and more frequent opportunities were afforded them of assembling together than they could possibly command, when obliged to repair to a great distance to enjoy that privilege; and they were thus enabled, with greater facility, to spread the knowledge of the truth among their unbelieving and ignorant neighbours—"freely giving what they had freely received." But when the bishops became actuated by a different spirit, counting gain godliness, ruling the flock as masters do their own possession, 1 Pet. v. 3, then the word *parish*, instead of continuing to signify the place of a pilgrim on the earth, became the technical name for this new lord's heritage; and the more extensive his territory was, the greater revenue he could derive from it—an idea that never once entered the mind of the first bishops. If the necessities or convenience of the brethren required two or more *places of meeting** in a district where there had been formerly but one, they might have more—but *only as parts and portions of the same parish, under the same bishop*, and furnished with one or more presbyters from *his presbytery* to rule and govern them *under his authority*. Thus was formed a kind of *imperium in imperio*, a church within a church—congregations governed by a foreign power—daughters of a mother church, and no longer independent.

This first took place in the *parish*† of the bishop of Alexandria, about the middle of the third century;—at least Dionysius the bishop of that church, is the first who speaks of *distinct congregations in the most remote suburbs of the city*;‡ and it appears that even for some time after this, all the other great bishoprics continued to be so many single congregations. From his mention of them as being in the *remotest suburbs*, it is easy to see that the convenience of the members was consulted in establishing these dependent congregations, though the laws of Christ were disregarded. At that time it was

* They had not departed so far from propriety as to call the house in which they met *the church*. Such a mode of speech would have sounded as strangely in their ears as it would in ours, to call a building *an assembly*, for both are equally absurd. In the year 265, when Paulus Samosatenus, bishop of Antioch, was deprived of his office for heresy, and Domus appointed in his place, he refused to resign *the church's house* (*tes ecclesia oikou*) but was compelled by the Emperor Aurelian to resign *that house* (*ton oikon*) not *that church*.—Euseb. lib. vii. c. xxx.

In the copy from which the Editor's transcript was taken, there appeared to have been another sentence of this Note; but not so many words as to be understood; and the Notes to which the two following marks † ‡ refer were wanting.

usu
nes
part
a ph
wer
tion,
adop
cong
chur
the r
In fa
influe
so mu
any o
Th
by wh
them
to de
defian
own k
We
was to
be one
be a
things;
weighi
modes
policy"
cause "
in his h
speakin
(Heb.)
Messiah
itself
39), "d
Such
ways of
the estab
worldly
end! B

the elders of the
believers was
afforded them
command, when
lege; and they
knowledge of the
—“freely giving
bishops became
ruling the flock
the word *parish*,
on the earth,
; and the more
ld derive from
st bishops. If
d two or more
rmerly but one,
s of the same
one or more
hem under his
perio, a church
power—daugh-

of Alexandria,
sius the bishop
gregations in
s that even for
inued to be so
m as being in
enience of the
congregations,
at time it was

house in which
ded as strangely
ly, for both are
shop of Antioch,
in his place, he
compelled by the
church.—Euseb.

ere appeared to
s as to be under-
r were wanting.

usual for the believers to assemble together every Lord's Day, Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday, and to those who lived in the remote parts of the city, it must often have been very incommodious to attend a place of meeting at a great distance from their homes. When they were sufficiently numerous in any suburb to form a separate congregation, it was therefore desirable, on many accounts, that they should adopt that measure—but why dependent on the bishop of another congregation? The motive on the part of the bishop of the *mother church* is obvious enough;—but what could induce the members of the newly organized congregation to agree to such an arrangement? In fact, the bishops had by this time acquired such an unscriptural influence over the minds of the people, and, by degrees, had obtained so much power, that few were disposed to question the propriety of any of their proceedings, and still fewer to brave their anathemas.

This naturally leads to some inquiry into the nature of the means by which they became possessed of an authority, not conferred on them by the Scriptures, and which at length became so shameless as to deny all control, so unbounded as to set the power of kings at defiance, and so arrogant as to call the kingdom of the Messiah their own kingdom, their own heritage.

We learn from the sealed book, Dan. vii. 8, that the power which was to stand up in opposition to the kingdom of the Messiah, was to be one having “eyes like the eyes of a Man:” in other words, it was to be a *seer*, prophet, or teacher, having “a mouth speaking great things;” one (Dan. viii. 23, 25) “understanding (Heb. pondering, weighing, well skilled in) dark sentences,” (obscure, enigmatical modes of speech,) that is, a dealer in mysteries; who, through “his policy” (matured understanding, through knowledge of his art), should cause “craft (treachery, deceit, guile, dissimulation, fraud) to prosper in his hand”—corrupting, by flatteries (xi. 32), such as do wickedly—speaking marvellous things (36) against the “Mighty of mighties;” (Heb.) that is, against the “Most Mighty, the King of kings, the Messiah!”—an ambitious and tyrannical power (ver. 37), *magnifying* itself above all (the kings of the earth)—greedy and covetous (ver. 39), “dividing the land for gain.”

Such was the spirit that actuated the men who perverted the right ways of the Lord—such was the object they had in view, namely, the establishment of their own power, and the promotion of their own worldly welfare—such was the iniquitous means employed to gain their end! By attending to the character thus given to them in the sealed

book, we shall be at no loss to discover a sufficient number of instances of this traffic in dark sayings, to enable us to understand a little the policy and craft by which they infatuated mankind, and by which Christian congregations were gradually led astray from the order which they received from the Apostles, and became worldly assemblies, infected with that infidel rebellious spirit, which in this trumpet is compared to *wormwood*.

It was chiefly by a perversion of words that ecclesiastics established their dominion over the minds of men. At first view, it appears surprising, that by the use of such an engine, effects so wonderful should have been brought about; but a very little inquiry will convince any person who pays attention to the subject, that, not in matters of religion only, but in all that concerns the general affairs of the world, the bulk of mankind, in all ages, have been duped by sounds, and made willing instruments in the hands of the designing and ambitious, to promote the selfish views of the latter. As I shall be under the necessity of alluding, in the course of the present disquisition, to numerous instances of this perversion of words, I shall here notice only two or three, which are necessary for illustrating the subject under consideration.

Christians were enjoined by their great Master, to observe "all things that he had commanded them"—and as *all things*, as we have seen, could only be observed by them in *church fellowship*, hence the repeated injunctions laid upon them to *esteem* and *honour* those whose more peculiar duty it was to see *all things* duly observed among them; hence the admonitions given to them to avoid *schisms* and *heresies*—hence, too, the exhortations addressed to the elders or bishops to "take heed to themselves and to all the flock: and to feed the flock of God, taking the bishop's office, not for the sake of gain, nor as being lords over a heritage." A brief exposure of the artifices by which injunctions, so simple as these, were perverted by the bishops and their adherents, to suit their own worldly views, will enable the reader to form some idea of the skill and dexterity with which they contrived to convert the plainest precepts into *dark sentences*; by their *policy* causing this kind of *craft* to prosper to such a degree, that, in a short time, they succeeded in setting aside entirely all the commandments of Jesus Christ, leaving to their followers nothing but the name of Christians. But this I shall reserve for another Section.

* That
mend the
be account
one of the
See *Histor*

SECTION III.—Of Schism and Heresy.

As schism and heresy were justly held to be crimes of the deepest dye among the first Christians, whoever dared to oppose the bishops, in any of their deviations from the primitive order, were sure to be charged with them. The flocks, fearful of failing in the duty they owed to those who were set over them, were gradually led to receive the opinion which the bishops favoured, as the mind and will of God. This would often be the case with the great majority, especially where the bishop was a man of imposing piety, Mark xiii. 22.—If the bishop's opponents continued to maintain their opinion, there was then a *schism* in the body—if they separated, to observe the ordinances, as enjoined by their only Master, they were *heretics*. The meaning of these words was extended to embrace ideas with which they had no connection originally, and at length was entirely changed—as has been the case with all those terms which, in the technical language of churchmen, are now called *ecclesiastical*.*

Schism (*schisma*) as applied to the church in the New Testament, had a very different signification in the days of the Apostles, from that which has since been imposed upon it. Schism might then exist in a congregation, and could exist in no other manner; in modern times it does not exist *in*, but *out of the church*. He who quits the communion of any church, however corrupt and polluted that church may be, commits the sin of *schism*—a doctrine as rational, according to Paul's method of reasoning, as it would be to maintain that a man is lame, because his neighbour has lost a leg. The word, as applied to men, signifies *discord, division, difference of opinion*. Thus, when the Jews could not agree whether Jesus was the Messiah or not, we are informed by the Evangelist John, (vii. 43. x. 19,) that there was a *division* (*schisma*, a schism) among them. So also, when the Pharisees were not agreed respecting him, after he had cured the blind man on the Sabbath, the same Evangelist, (ix. 16,) says "there was a schism among them." The word is applied to the church only in Paul's first Epistle to the Corinthians: "I beseech you, (says he), brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions (*schismata*)

* That such men as the learned and ingenious bishop Newcome should recommend the retaining of such terms in a reformed version of the Scriptures cannot be accounted for, but from the force of inveterate habit; and furnishes perhaps one of the strongest arguments that can be urged for rejecting them entirely. See *Historical View of the English Biblical Translation*, p. 346.

among you," i. 10. Now, here it is plain that *schism* consists in *the members of the same congregation speaking different things, instead of the same thing*, holding jarring opinions, instead of being "perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment;" and the Apostle, by what he immediately adds, shows that he affixed no other meaning to the word *schism*. "For (says he) it hath been reported to me that *there are contentions among you*." He does not say that any were separating from them—on the contrary, he charges the church itself, to whom he writes, with being schismatical; a thing impossible, in the modern acceptation of the term. The Apostle not only charges them with schism, but specifies the very act in which this was manifested—they were glorying in men, one saying, "I am of Paul;" another, "I of Apollos;" whereas he says believers should "glory in the Lord." In the eleventh chapter also, where he speaks of *schism*, (ver. 17, 18,) he does not make it consist in *separation*, but in "*coming together*, not for the better, but for the worse."—"When *ye come together* (says he) in the congregation, I hear that there be *divisions (schismata) among you*, and I partly believe it." He had, in the preceding part of the chapter, enumerated some of the points respecting which there were contentions among them—some, as it would appear, maintaining that a man might pray or teach with his head covered, and women appear unveiled in the public assemblies—a custom which neither he nor the congregations of God permitted (ver. 16); and in the following part of the chapter, he points out the disorderly way in which they eat the Lord's supper, as tending also to produce divisions. In the succeeding chapter, he illustrates the doctrine of concord and harmony, which he inculcates respecting the body of Christ, by the agreeing harmony of all the parts of the human body, every member being given to perform its own function without dissension, (as if the eye should desire to perform the office of the ear,) such a schism being impossible in the natural body, in which all the members mutually care for each other, xii. 25. These are all the passages, except two, in which the word *schism* occurs in the New Testament,* and in none of them is it spoken of as a crime *out of the*

* The other two passages are Matt. ix. 16, and Mark ii. 21.—*Schism* being an ecclesiastical word, our Translators, agreeably to the third rule enjoined to them by King James, (see *Fuller's Ch. Hist.* B. X. p. 46.) ought to have retained it throughout their version; but had they made their Translation speak of "new cloth put into an old garment, making the *schism* worse," they might have led a common reader to understand the real meaning of the word. To have omitted this Greek word entirely in their version, considering *how important it is*, would have be-

chu
sing
sion
wh
awa
bers
min
to h
In
Scri
latter
by th
unde
chan
it ma
not th
it nev
and t
wheth
(v. 17)
Saddu
(haire
should
the C
(xxviii
quality
term h
when p
found t
The cr

trayed gr
in 1 Cor.

* 'The
Thus Ep
and Luca
&c., &c.
in his acc
considers
a Christia
arose in C
reans, and
ledges to l
could not

church, nor does it appear possible to conceive how it can be so, since it consists in members of the same congregation having dissensions, or being at variance with each other in their opinions. But when a man (a schismatic, if you will) takes himself away, or is put away from the body, there is then an end of the schism, if the members that remain "all speak the same thing, being perfectly of one mind;"—if otherwise, they are still *schismatics*, though they continue to have fellowship together.

It is obvious from what has just been stated, that *schism*, in the Scripture sense of the word, might produce *heresies*; and indeed the latter could not take place in any congregation without being preceded by the former. But as the meaning of the word *heresy* (*hairesis*) has undergone as great a change as that of the word *schism*, and the change was effected under the same influence and for the same object, it may be proper to state here, for the information of such as know not the fact, that in Scripture use it means simply, *sect* or *party*, that it never has any other signification throughout the New Testament,* and that it never expresses any thing respecting the tenets of the sect, whether good or bad. Thus we are told, in the Acts of the Apostles, (v. 17) that the High Priest, and with him *the sect (hairesis) of the Sadducees*, cast the Apostles into prison; that certain of the *sect (haireseos)* of the *Pharisees* maintained, at Antioch, that the believers should be circumcised, and keep the law of Moses (xv. 5); and that the *Christians* were a *sect (haireseos)* every where spoken against, (xxviii. 22).—The tenets of the sect might be good or bad; their quality could only be gathered from something else coupled with the term *hairesis*. In this way it was employed by the orator Tertullus, when pleading against Paul before Felix, Acts xxiv. 5, "We have found this man a ring-leader of the *sect (haireseos)* of the *Nazarenes*." The crime charged was not that he was a sectarian, but that he be-

trayed great inattention; they have therefore contrived to introduce it once, viz., in 1 Cor. xii. 25, but there not very happily.

* The same thing may be asserted of the use of the word in profane writers. Thus Epictetus (lib. ii. c. 19) speaks of the *sect (haireseos)* of the Epicureans, and Lucan (in *Hermotim*. tom. i. p. 680) of ten *sects (haireseis)* of Philosophers, &c., &c. See Parkhurst's *Greek Lexicon*, under the word *hairesis*. Josephus, in his account of the Jewish *sects*, conforming to the heathen notions of the term, considers them as parties attached to different systems of philosophy. Epiphanius, a Christian writer of the 4th century, reckons among the *sects (haireseis)* which arose in Greece before the coming of Christ, the Stoics, the Platonists, Epicureans, and the Pythagoreans. He even numbers Judaism, which he yet acknowledges to have been derived from God—among the original *heresies*, which he could not have done, had he used the word in its modern acceptation.

longed to what was deemed a dangerous *sect*—the Nazarenes; and therefore Paul admits, in his answer, (ver. 14,) that he was a *sectarian*,* but denies that he maintained tenets contrary to the toleration granted by the Romans to the Jews, since he worshipped the God of his fathers, believing all things written in 'the law and the prophets. An argument which would be as convincing with Felix as that of his accusers; for he could not fail to consider them both as equally superstitious, and, as a Roman magistrate, he was bound to give equal protection to all sects among the Jews, whether old or new, if not dangerous to the state.†

There is one passage in Peter's Second Epistle, ii. 1, in which, according to the common English version, the word appears to be employed to express gross errors—"There shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in *damnable heresies*, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction;" but, in the original, the censure is not implied in the word *haireseis*,‡ but it is applied to those men who should be so wicked as to make divisions in opposition to that love and unity enjoined to all the followers of Jesus, teaching doctrines subversive of that faith which he and his Apostles taught. A maker of parties is a heretic in the Scripture sense of the word. Christians are admonished to be on their guard against all such, and not to suffer them to remain in their fellowship—"A man that is an heretic (*haireticon anthropon*) after

* "After the way which *they call heresy* (*hen legousin hairesin*), so worship I the God of my fathers." The propriety of the Apostle's pleading cannot be seen in the English version, in which the same word is rendered differently in the accusation and in the answer of the prisoner.

† The Jewish religion had not only received the sanction of the civil powers for the continuance of its establishment in Judea, but a toleration in other parts of the empire. The Apostle, therefore, employed the best possible argument to silence his accusers, for Felix knew that the Jews consisted of various *sects* or *parties*, and that their different sects no way destroyed the privileges secured to them by the Roman laws. They had the *Pharisees*, the *Sadducees*, the *Samaritans*, the *Essenes*—and Paul maintained that the *Nazarenes*, the new *sect*, were entitled to the same protection as the others, since they held the doctrines taught by Moses and the Prophets; and, which was of more importance in the eye of a Roman magistrate, "walked without offence toward God, and toward men."

‡ Dr. Campbell, in his Prelim. Dissert. to Transl. of the Gospels, vol. I. p. 434, 4to, after pointing out the grammatical construction of this passage in the original, and showing that it is incorrectly rendered in the English version, concludes thus:—"There are, therefore, two distinct and separate evils in those false teachers, of which the Apostle here gives warning. One is, the division they will make by forming to themselves sects or parties of adherents; the other is, the destructive principles they will entertain, and, doubtless, as they find occasion, disseminate among their votaries."

the first and second admonition, reject, knowing that he that is such is subverted and sinneth, being condemned of himself," Titus lii. 10, 11.

Schism and heresy, standing opposed to that love and unity so strenuously enjoined to the believers, and being marked as crimes of great enormity, it is no wonder that those who paid proper deference to the authority of the Apostles should have been extremely fearful of falling into them. Those bishops who sought to make a property of their parish, did not fail to turn this to their own advantage—"What! separate from the communion of your bishop's church, under pretence of convenience!—It is *schism* even to propose it—to do it is *heresy*." Such was the kind of arguments employed to prevent the formation of new congregations within the original bounds of parishes already established. The presiding presbyters having made themselves *the bishops* to the exclusion of the rest, it now became fashionable to talk in the following manner: God is *one*, Christ is *one*, the church is *one*, the seat (*kathedra* now appropriated to the bishop) is *one*, the rock on which the church is founded is *one*. To set up a new altar, and make a new bishop, besides the *one altar* and the *one bishop*, is impossible; whosoever gathers together elsewhere (than with the one bishop) scatters; it is adulterous, it is impious, and contrary to the Divine disposition.* "Obey your bishop as Jesus Christ did the Father, and the presbytery as the Apostles."† "My soul be security for theirs that obey their bishops, presbyters, and deacons."‡ The more silent any one finds his bishop, let him reverence him the more!! for whomsoever the Master of the house receives into his own household, we ought to receive as him that sent him. It is therefore evident, that *we ought to look upon the bishop even as we would do upon the Lord himself!* ||

If any opposer of the unchristian encroachments of the bishops, counting it his duty to obey God rather than men, dared to turn a deaf ear to this perversion of words, and presumed to call the attention of his brethren to the Scriptures of truth, as the only rule to guide their conduct, he then became a sower of discord among brethren—a perverter of the order of the house of God—an enemy of the peace of the church—a contemner of the bishop, who had been thought worthy by God to be set over the church—a proud and presumptuous rebel.¶

* Cyprian, Epist. 4, § 40.

† Ignat. ad Polycarp, § 6.

‡ Ignatius, Ep. ad Smirn., § 8.

|| Ignat. ad Ephes., § 6.

¶ A quotation or two from Cyprian, who wrote about the middle of the third century, will show the kind of declamation that was now substituted for Scripture

In short, any kind of opposition to the will of the bishop was the parent of every crime, and the source of every evil work : subjection to his authority was substituted for obedience to Christ ; and any attempt, without his perfect concurrence, to establish new congregations within those bounds which before had constituted one parish, subjected the actors to excommunication, as schismatics, for " dividing the flock with the bishop, separating the sheep from their pastor, and the children from their parent, and dissipating Christ's members."*

To sum up the whole, the *servants* of the churches, by a steady, cautious, persevering policy, at last made themselves the *masters*, and openly maintained that they were the *lords of the heritage* ! Nor will it appear surprising that they should have been able to effect this, when we consider of what kind of members the churches were at length composed, when many clave to them by flatteries, Dan. xi. 34, after the ruling powers began to take them under their protection, and when whole nations of Pagans were constituted Christians by virtue of a compact between a king and priest, or compelled by the sword to profess their belief in the creed of a fanatical conqueror.

SECTION IV.—Of the Origin of the Clerical Body.

For a long time the pastors had, on every occurrence, been labouring to improve the respect in which they were held by their flocks, and gradually widening the distance between them and the other members of their assemblies. In the early ages of Christianity, as we have seen, in every thing that regarded the discipline and general affairs of the church, the whole congregation had a voice ; but, in process of time, this was gradually taken out of their hands, and engrossed by the clergy—a body absolutely unknown in the primitive times. In proportion as the people lost their independence, the clergy heightened their claims, and became, if possible, more assiduous

authority :—" Neque enim aliunde nata sunt schismata, quam inde quod Sacerdote Dei non obtemperatur, nec unus in ecclesia ad tempus, Sacerdos, et ad tempus iudex vice Christi cogitur," Epist. iv., § 6.—" Hi sunt ortus atque conatus schismaticorum male cogitantium ut sibi placeant, ut præpositum superbo tumore contemnunt, sic de ecclesia receditur, sic altare profanum foris collocatur, sic contra pacem Christi, et ordinationem atque unitatem Dei rebellatur," Ep. 65 § 4.—" Inde schismata et hæresis obortus sunt ; et oriantur, dum episcopus qui unus est, et ecclesia præest superba quædam presumptione contemnitur, et homo dignatione Dei honoratus indignatus hominibus iudicatur," Epist. 69 § 4.

* Epist. 38, § 1.

* Clergy
Grotius tr
a senae w

shop was the
k : subjection
rist; and any
ew congrega-
d one parish,
s, for "divid-
n their pastor,
s members."*
by a steady,
e masters, and
ritage! Nor
to effect this,
ches were at
Dan. xi. 34,
ir protection,
Christians by
pelled by the
conqueror.

Body.

been labour-
y their flocks,
and the other
stianity, as we
e and general
oice; but, in
r hands, and
the primitive
pendence, the
more assiduous

ade quod Sacer-
Sacerdos, et ad
s atque conatus
superbo tumore
s collocatur, sic
ellatur," Ep. 65
n episcopus qui
contemnitur, et
Epist. 69 § 4.

in their dexterous management of dark sentences; at first insinuating, and afterwards maintaining, that, in virtue of their office, they were *sacred* and *sanctified* persons, in a sense different from that in which these terms could be applied to the other members of Christ's mystical body; that those who did not belong to any of the *sacred orders* were by no means qualified to deliberate and judge in *holy things*; and that it was the height of sacrilegious usurpation for unhallowed men (comprehending under that description the saints and faithful in Christ Jesus) to arrogate any power in concerns of this nature. As the many, which primitively formed but *one body*, 1 Cor. x. 17, became thus divided into *two distinct bodies*, the *clergy* and the *laity*—terms derived from two Greek words, *cleros* and *laos*, the former signifying *lot* or *inheritance*, the latter *people*, it may not be improper that we should here examine a little what authority the Scriptures furnish to support this distinction.

Throughout the whole of the New Testament the term *cleros*, as applied to persons, occurs but once, viz., in 1 Pet. v. 3, "*Med' hos katakurieountes ton cleron, alla typoi ginomenoi tou poimniou.*" Literally rendered, the passage stands thus: "not as domineering (or lording it) over the *heritage*,"* but being examples to the *flock*. In true canonical English, we should read *not domineering over the clergy*; but unhappily *the clergy* (*cleron*) in this passage are the very individuals that are, not only in this verse, but also in the preceding, denominated *the flock* (*poimniou*). In other words, *the clergy* here spoken of are *laymen*! But, perhaps, expressions may be found in the Old Testament which may be considered as furnishing something like a scriptural warrant for applying this term *cleros* exclusively to those whose office it was "to minister in holy things." Quite the contrary: God is, indeed, in these writings, said to be the inheritance of the Levites, because a certain portion of the sacrifices offered to God was, in part, to serve them instead of an estate in land, such as was given to the other tribes; but no where is the tribe of Levi called God's inheritance, though that term is frequently applied to the *whole nation*; as in Deut. ix. 29, "They are thy *people*, and thine *inheritance*, which thou broughtest out by thy mighty power." In the Septuagint version of this passage, *laos* and *cleros* are the words used for *people* and *inheritance*, and it is evident that both the terms

* *Cleroi*, in the plural, in ecclesiastical language, signifies *wealth* or *possession*. Grotius translates the passage *ne tyranniam exercitates in celum Christianorum*; a sense which has generally been followed.

are applied to the same persons—the laity are the clergy, and the clergy are the laity !*

Singular as it may appear that the wolves of whom Paul prophesied, Acts xx. 29, should have made such an unhappy selection of names to distinguish between themselves and those of whom they made a prey, it is by no means difficult to be accounted for. The bishops were so extremely anxious for the welfare of their respective flocks, and so much wiser than the Apostles, that in a short time after the death of the latter, they relieved the deacons from the trouble of managing the church's funds, and took all this labour upon themselves. Unexampled kindness ! The church's bounty might have been misapplied if left in the hands of men who were comparatively ignorant and ill informed, but in the hands of men of such exemplary sanctity and holiness as the pastors, no such danger was to be apprehended. The bishops still continued to enforce the duty of liberality, but now the motive was altered. The funds had gradually become their own property, but still they employed the same language in their exhortations as they had always done, beseeching those whom they addressed to be bountiful to God's *cleros*. Every philologist knows that words change their primitive signification insensibly, when associated with ideas with which they had originally no connection, till at length they acquire an entirely new meaning. This is exactly what took place in this instance. The pastors were continually enforcing the duty of liberality to God's *clergy*, that is, God's *inheritance* ; and it followed, as a matter of course, that those to whose use the donations were applied were meant by the term employed. The two ideas were so naturally connected with each other, that they could not be separated—those for whose benefit the money was collected were *the clergy*—those who applied it to their own use, received the benefit ; and, as *the people* (*laos*, the laity) in process of time were entirely excluded from participating in the fruits of their own bounty, they ceased, of course, to be a part of the clergy.

In a manner somewhat similar, the word *ecclesia* (church) was at length also peculiarly applied to those who had made it a property ; and hence, in violation of all propriety of speech, they were exclusively denominated *ecclesiastics* and *churchmen* ; names which only mean persons belonging to the *ecclesia* or church, and which consequently include every member of the church or congregation. With as much

* See Deut. iv. 20 ; also Campbell's Dissertation.

propriety
appealed
called
bers
but th
they
they
to dr
Christ
and h
as pos
that m
bearing

But
hinder
Apost
were c
power
organiz
but as
"all th
2 Tim
by the
portion
calling
order,*

The
adheren
men, a
they co
against
practice
as they

* Altho
Colosse
the notice
17), that
observed,
Apostle in
which it is
their regu
Christ.

propriety might the pastors have appropriated to themselves the appellation of *Christianoi*, or formed a new name from *Christos*, and called themselves exclusively *Christikoi*, denying to the other members of the *ecclesia* the privilege of being called by name of *Christ*; but this would have been a most unprofitable appropriation, for, had they allowed none to be *Christians* but their own body, whence could they have derived their emoluments? This would have been at once to dry up every source of revenue; but the greater the numbers of Christians, the greater the contribution that could be levied from them, and hence the zeal of those who fleeced the flock, to add to it as many as possible, no matter what their character and conversation under that name, till at length the whole body became infected and foul, bearing only *gall and wormwood*.

But this evil did not come to its height till the Roman power, which hindered the revelation of the "Man of Sin" in the days of the Apostles, was taken out of the way, 2 Thess. ii. 7. Those who were determined to yield obedience to the laws of Christ, had still power to separate themselves from these corrupt communions, and to organize themselves after the model of the primitive congregations; but as many as had recourse to this expedient infallibly found that "all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution," 2 Tim. iii. 12. They were stigmatized as schismatics and heretics by the corrupt teachers, who, by every secession of this kind, lost a portion of their gains; and their bitterest enemies were those who, calling themselves Christians, ought to have "joyed in beholding their order,* and the steadfastness of their faith in Christ," Col. ii. 5.

The *orthodox* (another term appropriated to themselves and their adherents by these corrupters of the truth, and which, with churchmen, always means those who believe, or profess to believe, what they command them) never failed to circulate calumnious writings against all who dared to dissent from their unscriptural doctrines and practices. These attacks sometimes produced replies; and, as often as they did, the strongest, not in argument, but in power and influence,

* Although Paul addresses this Epistle to the saints and faithful brethren at Colosse, without mentioning either bishops or deacons, it may be presumed, from the notice here taken of their *order*, as well as from the charge to Archippus (iv. 17), that they were not without the appointed servants. At same time, let it be observed, that the very same Greek word (*taxin, order, regularity,*) is used by the Apostle in 1 Cor. xiv. 40, "Let all things be done decently and in order;" from which it is reasonable to infer that the cause of his joy in the Colossians, was their regular observance of all things connected with steadfastness in the faith in Christ.

were sure to gain the victory. In the first ages, these controversies were chiefly carried on in Greek, a language admitting of an almost infinite number of derivatives and compounds, expressing shades of difference of signification of which no other language is susceptible. The smallest slip or inaccuracy in the choice of an expression was *an error in the faith*, and in process of time a *heresy* (when that word acquired its ecclesiastical signification), and any attempt to explain only exposed the individual to the danger of erring still more damably. If the dissenter, however, had, on any occasion, the better of the argument (which, unhappily for the peace of the church, was the case as often as he had the Scriptures on his side, and was careful not to entangle himself in the logical subtleties thrown out for him by his adversaries), his defeat was not the less certain on that account. Corruption had now become so general, that those who fattened by it, with unblushing effrontery, supported each other in overwhelming every person who dared to attack one of their *sacred order*.

In the primitive ages, it was not unusual for any particular congregation to ask for the brotherly advice and assistance of the neighbouring congregations when any case of difficulty arose among them. The request went from the whole body, and the answer, as was the case when the church at Jerusalem wrote to the church at Antioch respecting circumcision, Acts xv., was returned by the whole of the brethren whose advice had been solicited. By degrees the brethren were excluded from any share in this correspondence, and the bishops took upon themselves to dictate for their respective congregations. The interference of neighbouring congregations in each others affairs was not, however, confined to asking or giving advice by letter: the presbyters, accompanied by delegates from among the other members, used sometimes to meet at any convenient place. These meetings (*synods*) at length became regular: the bishops never failed to attend them: but it was not so with the other members; and, when any of them did attend, they were not always the same persons who had been at former meetings. The business, of course, was at last managed by the *clergy*, and in process of time the *laity* were entirely excluded. The clergy having thus established *synods* composed of their own order, had no longer anything to fear from their respective congregations; and when any question came before them, their only object was how they might best suit the decision to the interest of their own body. When matters had once been brought to this state, it is a subject of wonder that the dissenting laymen should invariably be found

in t
mai
man

SEC

TH

a sup
the e
own
domin
own
bound
stituti
all the
ment

* Ti
tocratic
presbyte
bishops
ment be

† Th
and from
bishop's
became
been app
at length
obtained
the bisho
much tro
ceived th
deavoure
into dea
deaneries
preserved
the dean
clergy of
changes,

† The
body was
a bishop—
panied wi
member o
very inade
of a large
copal chai
massacred

in the wrong in every case, excepting only when the opinions he maintained were of such a nature that they could, by a little dexterous management, be made subservient to the usurpation of ecclesiastics !

SECTION V.—*Of the steps that more directly led to the establishment of Ecclesiastical Dominion.*

The presiding elders, in the different congregations, having assumed a superiority over their colleagues, and made themselves bishops to the exclusion of the rest, in such a manner, as at last to make their own office different in point of order ;* having established a territorial dominion over their respective parishes ; and, by this means, their own authority over every new congregation within their original bounds, all of which new congregations, contrary to the original institution, were dependent ;† and having, in process of time, excluded all those who were not office-bearers from any share in the management of the affairs of the body to which they belonged‡—a different

* Till about the middle of the third century, the churches had a mixed aristocratical and democratical government ; the former consisting of the bishops or presbyters, gradually gaining the ascendancy ; from that time the power of the bishops over the other presbyters gained ground, and in a short time the government became purely monarchical, all power being usurped by the bishops.

† These dependent congregations were provided with presbyters by the bishop, and from this time the term *parish*, which formerly expressed the extent of the bishop's charge, was applied to the bounds of the subordinate cures, and *diocese* became the name of the bishop's dominions : *ecclesia*, which, by popular use, had been applied to the place in which the bishop's *ecclesia* met, was gradually and at length universally given to these meeting-houses ; and then the mother church obtained the name of *cathedral*, from *kathedra*, a *seat* or *chair*, because there the bishop's throne was erected. The bishops having thus divested themselves of much trouble without parting with any of their emoluments, for they still received the same proportion from the public contributions of the whole diocese, endeavoured to bring this division into a kind of regular system, dividing the diocese into *deaneries*, so called because they included at first ten parishes. The deaneries did not long continue to consist of ten presbyters, but the name was preserved, as was that of the president or chief of the ten, who was called *decanos*, the dean ; and the deanery of the cathedral, being as it were the head of the clergy of the diocese, obtained the name *capitulum*, the chapter. Other divisions, changes, and new titles followed, not necessary here to be enumerated.

‡ The only vestige that remained of the rights formerly belonging to the whole body was, that in some places the people continued to assemble at the election of a bishop—an event that was generally conducted with tumult, and often accompanied with bloodshed. Those who have witnessed a contested election of a member of Parliament for Middlesex or Westminster, may form an opinion, but very inadequately, of the outrage and riot that attended the election of the bishop of a large diocese.—In the contest between Damasus and Ursinus for the episcopal chair of Rome, about the middle of the 4th century, 137 people were massacred !

kind of warfare followed. The bishops having secured their own supremacy in their respective dioceses, the more ambitious among them, not content with the share of wealth and power, which they had thus acquired, having now become "Lords of the Gentiles," began to prosecute means for subjugating their neighbouring bishops, and extending their own dominion. Nor was the accomplishment of this attended with so much difficulty as might at first view be imagined. Men's minds were in some measure prepared for it by the changes that had already been effected. The authority of the bishop having superseded that of the Scriptures, nothing could be more natural than that the great bishops should lord it over the little.—But who were the great bishops?—Those who had the richest congregations; that is, the bishops of the largest cities.

Other circumstances also concurred to give them this superiority. The churches, as has been already noticed, maintained a correspondence with each other, and sometimes met, by deputies, in synods, to consult together on matters of great and general concern. It was generally more convenient that the smaller in number should go to the place where the greatest resided than the contrary; hence the metropolis of any province became the usual place of meeting; "and the bishops of that place, from a sort of natural title to preside in the convention, were, by the gradual but free operation of custom, regarded as the head of the body. Hence the bishop of the metropolis was, very naturally, denominated the *metropolitan*; and this term was, by consequence, understood to denote his presidency over the bishops of the province."* In some of the African provinces, however, and in Numidia and Mauritania, the honour of presidency was determined by seniority. The senior bishop was president of the synod, and head of the province. Accordingly, with them he was denominated *primus*, primate, and not metropolitan. A struggle for power was now the order of the day. In proportion as the bishops of the other cities found their dignity eclipsed by that of the metropolitans, they sought consolation by exercising lordship over the country bishops. It is not necessary that the various steps they pursued should be traced in this place: suffice it to observe, that at length they suppressed the country bishops by canon, and annexed their bishoprics to those of the next city bishops.

As all the provinces within the same prefecture had a closer con-

* Campbell's Lectures, vol. i. p. 284, 285.

nece
civil
to ec
conv
civil
the p
over
the la
their
To be
over t
by the
over th
by can
Only
jugatic
presidi
bishops
were th
thing c
should
no othe
the acc
fectural
that any
diocese,
country

† There
those gove
called exa
† There
vinces;
governed
arising fro
made a pa
ministry—
with pre-e
Jerusalem
civil dioces
tinople, w
though bef
patriarchs
metropolita

ured their own
ambitious among
er, which they
Gentiles," be-
ouring bishops,
omplishment of
w be imagined.
y the changes
bishop having
re natural than
t who were the
tions; that is,

is superiority.
l a correspon-
s, in synods, to
cern. It was
should go to
ry; hence the
meeting; "and
preside in the
stom, regarded
metropolis was,
s term was, by
the bishops of
wever, and in
as determined
ne synod, and
denominated
or power was
s of the other
ropolitans, they
untry bishops.
ed should be
ey suppressed
prics to those

a closer con-

nection with one another, than those which happened to have different civil governors, and to be more disjoined, this communion, in respect to ecclesiastical polity, was enlarged, and councils were sometimes convened from all the churches within the prefecture, or at least the civil diocese, which gradually gave the bishop of the capital, where the prefect had his residence, and kept his court, the like ascendant over the metropolitans, within the bounds of that jurisdiction, which the latter had obtained, from similar causes, over the bishops within their respective provinces,* and hence had *patriarchs* their origin.† To be brief: the very same powers which the bishops had usurped over their colleagues, the presbyters, was thus claimed and acquired by the metropolitans over the bishops, and soon after by the patriarchs over the metropolitans—usurpations which were afterwards confirmed by canon, when Constantine professed the Christian religion.

Only one step more was wanting to complete the climax of subjugation and dependance. From mere local circumstances, first the presiding bishop, then the metropolitan, and lastly, the patriarchal bishops, had established their sovereignty over those who primarily were their equals in every thing that respected apostolic order. Nothing could be more natural than that the bishop of the imperial city should claim and acquire a similar sovereignty over those who had no other right to their usurped authority, than what had arisen from the accidental circumstance of being bishops of metropolitan or prefectural cities.‡ The principle being once admitted and acted upon, that any particular bishop (whether in a single congregation, a civil diocese, a metropolitan city, or in any other of the divisions of the country made by the civil government) had a superiority over other

* Campbell's Lectures, vol. i. p. 285.

† These patriarchs were also called archbishops, as were also the primates. In those governments which the Greeks called *eparchies*, the head bishops were called *exarchs*, a title intermediate between that of patriarch and metropolitan.

‡ There were prefectures at Rome, which presided over the subsidiary provinces; Alexandria over Egypt, Lybia, and Pentapolis; Antioch, which governed Syria and other Oriental provinces. Sometime after those distinctions arising from local importance had been established, the See of Jerusalem was made a patriarchate in honour of the holy city, where Christ consummated his ministry—the only instance that can be produced of any city being honoured with pre-eminence from other than secular considerations. The patriarch of Jerusalem had under him Palestine and Arabia Petrea—originally a part of the civil diocese of Antioch. The last established patriarchate was that of Constantinople, which, becoming the royal residence, attained extensive dominion; though before that period it was a place of no importance. There were no patriarchs in the western diocese of Gaul, Spain, and Britain, but as many metropolitans as provinces.

bishops, it followed as a matter of course, especially after the Christian religion received (in the 4th century) a legal establishment in the Roman empire, that the bishop of the seat of empire should, in consequence of the superior power of his city, enjoy over metropolitans an authority similar to that which, from local circumstances of the same kind, they had acquired over the bishops of more insignificant cities. In the principle there could be no difference—but it is easy to be seen that the consequences resulting from it would be as much more fatal to the profession of genuine Christianity, as the power of the imperial head was greater than that of any of the subordinate jurisdictions of the empire.

How far the pretensions of the See of Rome might have been carried, had the seat of empire not been removed, it is impossible to say; but the probability is, that it never would have acquired the power which it afterwards did. But Constantinople becoming the imperial residence, it was easy to be seen that the bishopric would, by the operation of the same causes which had given the first place to the Roman See, if not counteracted, become its superior. Hitherto, it had not been necessary for the bishop of Rome to have recourse to any other artifices for the establishment and maintenance of his power, than what was common to his brethren in the Antichristian race; but possessing local advantages, he obtained, without extraordinary exertions, higher honours. Now, however, it became necessary, in his eyes, in order to avoid comparative degradation, to employ every method that could be devised to keep down a rival, and to improve every circumstance that might present itself for the elevation of his own authority.—The Great Star was not to be eclipsed by a lesser luminary.

Many circumstances conspired to favour the pretensions of the Roman See. The distinctions of which I have been speaking, and which, at first, were more of an honorary than judicial nature, gradually acquired all that importance which naturally attaches to legal superiority. Primarily, as we have seen, presbyters were set apart or ordained to their office by “the laying on of the hands of the presbytery,” 1 Tim. iv. 14; now the bishop claimed an exclusive title to ordain *his* presbyters—the metropolitan challenged the same right in regard to the consecration of the bishops in his province, and the patriarch in his instalment of the metropolitans.—The bishop was umpire in all differences that arose among his presbyters; the metropolitan settled the disputes among the bishops under him, and the patriarch exercised a similar authority over the metropolitans. But,

in
we
sho
to a
I
the
simi
The
wou
chu
that
adv
thru
rival
digni
his si
Besid
his f
than
to ex
follow
Ecc
fore C
clergy
perty
tions o
reignin
utmost
being p
spiritua
they co
people
tually f
rapacio

SECTION

Having
tions fro

in the exercise of an authority originating in circumstances such as we have pointed out, it was just as natural that an aggrieved patriarch should appeal to a higher bishop, as the metropolitan should appeal to a patriarch, or a subordinate bishop to a metropolitan.

It would be a waste of time to enter here into an argument to show the advantages which an old and admitted authority possesses over a similar one of a recent establishment, when the two become rivals. The bare circumstance of Constantinople becoming the seat of empire, would have infallibly operated to make its bishop the head of the church, had not the previous operation of similar causes already given that place to another. The bishop of Rome had no rival in his first advances to the supremacy: on the contrary, everything concurred to thrust the power upon him;—but the bishop of Constantinople had a rival to displace before he could arrive at the enjoyment of that dignity—a rival who, with whatever comparative ease he had acquired his situation, knew its sweets too well to give it up without a struggle. Besides the dignities conferred on the bishop of Constantinople, though his fellow patriarchs in the east could not prevent them, any more than they could the removal of the seat of the empire, could not fail to excite their jealousy, and the consequences that might be expected followed.

Ecclesiastical corruption had made considerable progress, long before Constantine became the patron of churchmen. Many of the clergy had already, as far as circumstances would allow, made a property of their flocks, and given sufficient evidence that no considerations of duty, but merely the restraints imposed upon them by the reigning power, prevented them from carrying their usurpations to the utmost. What was to be expected, when the pastors, in place of being persecuted, were loaded with honours—when, in addition to the spiritual authority, pretended to have been derived from the Apostles, they could hold out imperial edicts, enjoining the submission of the people? Nothing could be hoped for from such men but what actually followed—a struggle for power, and the most relentless and rapacious tyranny.

SECTION VI.—*Of the Contest Maintained between the Bishops of Rome and of Constantinople for Supremacy.*

Having, in the preceding Sections, endeavoured to trace those deviations from the primitive practice, which, aided by other circumstances,

destroyed the independence of Christian congregations, and led to the establishment of ecclesiastical tyranny, I now proceed to offer a few remarks on the contest which was for some time maintained by the blazing Star of the West, and the new Eastern Comet, decked with the sunbeams of the imperial court, and which, in its issue, tended to establish the supremacy of the former.

On the establishment of Christianity (to use that term in its political acceptation) in the Roman empire, the dignity and secular power of the magistrates determined, in almost every instance, the dignity and spiritual jurisdiction of the clergy in every city—their precedency being always regulated by the rank of their respective prefects or other magistrates. Of course, the bishop of Rome, in the very nature of things, had the first rank. It is true, strictly speaking, that he was not in name even an exarch—but the very circumstance that prevented him from obtaining, in the first instance, a high sounding name, serves to show that he possessed what was much more substantial. The civil diocese of Italy, the first, the most opulent and populous in the empire, was, on account of its extent and importance, divided into two, in the ecclesiastical arrangement; and as neither could be called *the diocese*, to the exclusion of the other, they were called *vicariates* or *vicarages*. That which fell to the See of Rome contained no less than ten provinces, and included the islands of Sicily, Corsica, and Sardinia.

Possessing so extensive a jurisdiction, enjoying a degree of opulence and splendour which even kings could not surpass, they might have been satisfied with the importance they had acquired; and so they seemed to be, till Constantine and his successors, by the honours they heaped upon the bishop of the new imperial city, excited their jealousy.

From this time the Roman pontiff employed uncommon assiduity to secure and extend his influence. Knowing by experience the value of imperial favour, he did everything in his power to retain it, but he plainly saw that he was not now to be depended on for the maintenance of his importance. When exerted in his favour, it could serve his ambition; but it might also gratify the ambition of another, and that other a prelate, who, from local circumstances, now possessed many advantages over him. He, therefore, as any other unprincipled ecclesiastic would have done in the same position, resolved to consolidate the power he had already acquired, by every method in his power; to improve all adventitious circumstances to

str
an
po
be

Sar
wh
dra
frie
shor
met
Rom
by
that
law,
bish
by p
pow
that,
of bis
great
Indec
disse
the ty
In
rather
sudden
their
tion.
instan
his ow
to wha
the sm
resolve
reap th
held at
the Gr
bishop
placed,
bishop
Antioch

strengthen it; and to attach to himself, at any expense of principle, and by every kind of artifice, as many of the dignified clergy as he possibly could, that, by their joint influence and exertions, he might be the better enabled to maintain his ground against a hated rival.

The system of tactics soon began to show itself. The council of Sardis, in the year 347 (when the Arian controversy inflamed the whole Christian community), after the Oriental bishops were withdrawn, was, by the influence of Osius, bishop of Cordova, a strenuous friend of Pope Julius, induced to make a canon, that if any bishop should think himself unjustly condemned by his comprovincials and metropolitans, his judges should notify their sentence to the bishop of Rome, who might either confirm it, or order the cause to be re-examined by some of the neighbouring bishops. And in the year 372, or about that time, Valentinian, at the instigation of the Roman See, enacted a law, empowering the bishop of Rome to examine and judge other bishops, that religious and ecclesiastical disputes might not be decided by profane or secular judges. This exemption of the clergy from the power of laymen, was so gratifying to those of the West in particular, that, overlooking its tendency to enslave the whole order, a number of bishops soon after synodically assembled at Rome, and expressed great gratitude for the favour thus conferred on them by the emperor. Indeed, it would scarcely have been safe for any in that quarter to dissent, after the passing of a law which virtually subjected them to the tyranny of one of their own number.

In the East, however, the canon law above mentioned had little, or rather, no force. The power of the patriarchs was too great to be suddenly subdued—not that the emperors had not power to enforce their own laws, but the others had influence enough to avert its operation. The bishop of Constantinople, warned, however, by this fresh instance of partiality to the old See, redoubled his diligence to extend his own influence. He had seen, in the person of the Roman pontiff, to what a high pinnacle of worldly splendour, importance, and power, the smiles of the emperor could raise a favourite churchman, and he resolved to profit by the lesson. Nor was it long before he began to reap the fruits of his assiduity. In a council, consisting of 150 bishops, held at Constantinople in the year 381, by the authority of Theodosius the Great, the bishop of that city was, during the absence of the bishop of Alexandria, and against the consent of the Roman pontiff, placed, by the third canon of that council, in the first rank after the bishop of Rome, and, consequently, above those of Alexandria and Antioch.

The bishop of Rome, as we have seen, acquired his rank without a struggle, and consequently without exciting the jealousy of others:—very different was the elevation of the new dignitary. He received his honours at the expense of all the eastern bishops, and it was not to be expected that the Sees of Alexandria and of Antioch, formerly next in rank to the See of Rome, could behold his elevation with cordiality or with indifference. In fact, they found themselves degraded, and they were interested in preventing, as far as they were able, every new accession of power and dignity to the favoured See. This was a happy circumstance for the bishop of Rome, and he did not fail to improve it.

From this time the struggle between the two rival Sees was incessant. The bishop of the new city having, by the favour of the emperor, become the *second* in the church, naturally concluded that, by the same partiality, he might, in process of time, acquire the *first* place, an object worthy the ambition of a churchman. Can it excite wonder, then, that he should make the attempt? Everything seemed to favour his design. Residing in the imperial city, associating with court favourites, enjoying frequent opportunities of conversing with the emperor himself, and, above all, the ear of the ladies of the court, it appeared scarcely possible that he should fail in obtaining the object of his desire. Nestarius was the first bishop who enjoyed these new honours conferred on the See of Constantinople. His successor, John Chrysostom, brought Thrace, Asia, and Pontus, under its jurisdiction; and succeeding bishops showed an equal zeal in augmenting the privileges, and extending the dominion of their See; nor was it long till the whole eastern part of Illyricum was added to their former acquisitions.

In the meantime, the Popes were equally active in subjugating all the western prelates to their ghostly jurisdiction, and omitted no favourable opportunity to obtain the imperial sanction to their usurpations. In 445, Leo, by the influence he acquired over the weak mind of Valentinian III., procured an edict, enjoining an absolute obedience to the will of the bishop of Rome, throughout all the churches of the empire; declaring that the bishops could attempt nothing, unless by the Pope's authority, without a violation of ancient custom; and ordering that any bishop, summoned to appear before his judicature, should be carried thither by the governor of the province in which he resided. The western metropolitans were thus brought more and more under the dominion of the Roman See. That respect to the See which was at first voluntary, and merely complimentary,

rank without a
of others:—

He received
and it was not
ioch, formerly
elevation with
and themselves
as they were
favoured See.
e, and he did

ees was inces-
favour of the
concluded that,
quire the *first*
Can it excite
anything seemed
sociating with
nversing with
es of the court,
ning the object
yed these new
ccessor, John
s jurisdiction;
gmenting the
or was it long
o their former

ubjugating all
d omitted no
their usurpa-
ver the weak
g an absolute
ghout all the
could attempt
ion of ancient
near before his
the province
thus brought
That respect
omplimentary,

was thus gradually moulded into a settled legal dependance, and, however reluctantly submitted to at first, became, at length, natural by habit, and was daily more and more fortified by that increasing influence which enabled the Popes to favour the pretensions of candidates for vacant Sees, and to fill them with their own adherents.

The Constantinopolitan patriarch maintained, however, his own authority in the east, in spite of this law, and continued to extend his jurisdiction. But what gave to him the highest ecclesiastical authority, and excited most the opposition of the Roman pontiff, was the following, being the 18th canon made by the Council of Chalcedon in the year 451:—

“Whereas the fathers, with great propriety, bestowed the chief honours on the See of Old Rome, *because it was the imperial city*; and whereas the 150 fathers (meaning the Council of Constantinople, holden in 381, and noticed above), beloved of God, actuated by the same motive, conferred the like dignity on the most holy See of New Rome (Constantinople), judging it reasonable that the city honoured by the seat of empire, and of the senate, and equal in civil privileges with ancient Rome, should be equally distinguished also by ecclesiastical privileges, and enjoy the second place in the church, being next to Old Rome, we ratify and confirm.” &c.

The same council confirmed, also, the eastern dignity in the spiritual government of those provinces over which he had usurped the jurisdiction.

Leo the Great, as he is called, then bishop of Rome, and his friends, strenuously and vehemently opposed the passing of those decrees, but their efforts were vain, the court supporting the decision of the Grecian bishops. Finding the vantage ground of imperial favour occupied by his adversary, the pontiff had recourse to subtilty and to artifices, which, probably, he would never have conceived in other circumstances, and already began to cherish that spirit of rebellion against the higher powers by which the *Man of Sin* was to be eminently characterised. But of this hereafter.

Notwithstanding the redoubled efforts of the new patriarch, a variety of circumstances united in augmenting the power and authority of the See of Rome. The bishops of Alexandria and Antioch, unable to make head against the lordly prelate of Constantinople, fled often

* I have here followed Dr. Campbell's translation.—*Lectures on Eccles. Hist.*, vol. I., p. 290.

to the Roman pontiff for succour against his violence ; and the inferior order of bishops used the same method, when their rights were invaded by the prelates of Alexandria and Antioch. So that the bishop of Rome, taking all these prelates alternately under his protection, daily added new degrees of influence and authority to the Roman See, rendered it every where respected, and was thus imperceptibly establishing the supremacy of Rome. They admitted its existence ; but they held it to be the work of their own creation. This is plain from the canon above quoted. It is true, that these fathers claim for their predecessors the merit of having *bestowed* on the Roman bishop the honours he had *acquired*. This, however, alters not the case. It is common for men to make a merit of granting what they cannot withhold, and the larger the boon, the greater the dignity of the donor. It is an indirect way of claiming importance, and, in the instance before us, only serves to show, that the distinctions in rank and dignity which prevailed among the bishops, were not then pretended to have been derived from Christ, Peter, or the College of the Apostles : and that, in theory, they held all ecclesiastical honours to be the gift of the church, (by that term meaning their own body,) though in practice nothing could be more false.

As I shall have occasion, hereafter, to notice other circumstances which contributed to the fabric of spiritual tyranny, I will not now take up more of the reader's time in tracing, step by step, the progress of the contest between New and Old Rome, for the precedence. Suffice it to say, that the contest was carried to a period considerably beyond the fifth century, to which I wish at present to confine my observations, and terminated at length in the entire separation of the Latin and Greek churches. But that the reader may not lose sight of the object that rendered this discussion necessary—the effects produced on the profession of Christianity by the fall of the Great Star from his own proper sphere—it is necessary I should here remark, that this dispute for pre-eminence pervaded the whole body of the clergy. The additions made by the emperors and pious devotees to the wealth, honours, and advantages of the bishops, were followed by a proportionable augmentation of vices and luxury, particularly among those who lived in opulent cities. The greater bishops contended with each other, in the most scandalous manner, concerning their respective jurisdictions ; insulted and degraded those teachers who had not the “ arm of flesh ” to give them protection ; and imitated, in their manner of living, the arrogance, voluptuousness, and luxury of

magist
same r
shown
down t
order ;
calling
exampl
honour
authorit
member
ecclesia
people !
verted !
death ;
wood ; i
agent.

To co
star,” wh
from hea
he had th
but he ac
proper sp
disciples o
having be
rebellion
stream, an
objects of

“ The fo
smitten, and
so as the th
a third part
I need sc
often the lar
to systems o
former, mea
the Sun of

magistrates and princes. The presbyters, who were primarily of the same rank with the bishops (these two appellations, as has been shown, being only different names for the same office) being thrust down to a lower seat, now contended for precedency in their new order; the victors assuming a prefix to the name of their office, and calling themselves *arch-presbyters*; while the deacons, imitating the examples of their superiors, had also their struggles for distinguishing honours, and created *arch-deacons* among them, who claimed an authority and power superior to that which was vested in the other members of their order. In one point, all the different ranks of ecclesiastics were agreed, namely, to trample on the rights of the people! Thus was the independence of the churches of Christ subverted!—These “fountains of living water” became the sources of death; for many continued to drink the water poisoned with *worm-wood*; in the poisoning of which the “blazing star” was the principal agent.

To conclude my remarks on the third Trumpet—the “blazing star,” who thus poisoned the rivers and fountains of water, “fell from heaven.” His aim was to rise, and we shall see hereafter, that he had the impiety to “exalt himself above all that is called God;” but he actually lost all right to any kind of rule in that which was his proper sphere; and having thus fallen, it was no longer lawful for the disciples of Christ to yield him any obedience or subjection. These having been *sealed* (see Rev. vii.) to be preserved from this general rebellion against their only Master, refused to drink the poisoned stream, and, fearless of the wrath of man, from this time became the objects of the scorn, hatred, and persecution of ecclesiastics.

THE FOURTH TRUMPET.

“The fourth angel sounded, and the third part of the sun was smitten, and the third part of the moon, and the third part of the stars; so as the third part of them was darkened, and the day shone not for a third part of it, and the night likewise,” Rev. viii. 12.

I need scarcely repeat that, in hieroglyphical language, which is often the language of prophecy, the sun, moon, and stars, are applied to systems of rule among men, whether political or religious;—in the former, meaning kings, their people, and rulers;—in the latter, Christ, the Sun of Righteousness, his followers, and the rulers in his church.

But here we are prevented from applying the prophecy to the church of Christ, by "the third part of the sun," to which it alludes, being *eclipsed*; for "her sun shall never set," Isa. lx. 20. We are, therefore, under the necessity of looking for its completion in that body politic, called "the third part," throughout the book of Revelation, namely, the Roman empire.

By the sounding of the second Trumpet we were informed of circumstances which in their nature could lead to no other consequences than those that are pointed out by this fourth Trumpet; for "a kingdom divided against itself cannot stand," Matt. xii. 25.—The Roman empire, rent with internal dissensions, could not hope to escape the common lot of nations in similar circumstances, unless this breach could be healed. This trumpet informs us it was not healed. "The third part of the sun was *smitten*, and the third part of the moon, and the third part of the stars.—The "burning mountain that was thrown into the sea"—given for a prey to invading barbarians, was to be divided, and to receive new masters. It had only one before, but that one (*the sun*) and all his subordinate rulers, (*the stars*.) were to be eclipsed by a new authority; and the glory of the Roman people, so far as that was connected with the power of the former master, was to be annihilated: so that the splendour of the imperial head, called here "the third part of the day, (because the sun rules the day) ceased to shine;" and, as the necessary consequences, the splendour of those inferior magistrates, who only shine by a borrowed or reflected light, compared here to "the light of the night," also ceased to diffuse their rays throughout the same "third part" in which the imperial power was eclipsed.

The rise of the Roman power was predicted in the sealed book (Daniel) under different figures, but particularly that of a ferocious beast, (ch. vii.,) with *ten horns*, that is, *ten kings* or *kingdoms*, according to the angel's explanation of the term *horns*. Here, however, there was something *sealed up*—impossible to be understood, without an authentic interpretation: for, in ch. vii. 23, Daniel was told that this beast was "the fourth kingdom on earth"—*one* kingdom; and yet he is informed (ver. 24) that the ten horns are *ten* kingdoms—not ten kings that might follow each other in succession in the kingdom: for "they were to reign together," otherwise "three of them" could not be plucked up by the other horn that was to "rise after them." Those events which were to realize and give consistency to this, otherwise unintelligible, part of the sealed book, are the subject

of the
lypse
after
out in
In
sketch
mand
native
ever,
perien
endeav
nihilate
Roman
Arc
when h
only ten
minister
of Gasc
set up to
prince's
ten thou
married
persuasi
share the
Silico, w
secretly
crossed th
Cappado
the Goth
provinces
situation o
dius, as a
the honour
time oppos
them sue f
large army
with him o
Arcadius's
to Constant
his rival. S

of the second and fourth Trumpets, and of other parts of the Apocalypse: and it will be seen, in our progress, that this vast empire, even after the fall of the imperial head, continued to be one, when parcelled out into ten kingdoms.

In treating of the second Trumpet, I endeavoured to give a concise sketch of events which in their progress gradually wrested the command of the armies, and all places of trust and emolument, from the native Romans, and vested them in the hands of aliens. This, however, was but a part of the change which the empire was to experience. By the events which followed, and of which I shall now endeavour to give a brief outline, the imperial power was at last annihilated, and the sovereignty divided, along with the territories of the Roman empire among the various invaders.

Arcadius, the son of Theodosius, was only seventeen years of age when he succeeded to the empire of the East: Honorius, his brother, only ten, when he began to reign in the West (an. 395). Stilico was minister to the latter; Rufinus to the former. Rufinus was a native of Gascony, Stilico a Vandal. Under these ministers every thing was set up to sale; and offices were so prodigiously increased, that the prince's age, whom Julian had reduced to seventeen, were now ten thousand. Rufinus intended that his own daughter should be married to Arcadius, but the latter having married Eudoxia, by the persuasion of the eunuch Eutropius, the minister now resolved to share the empire with his master. To prevent any impediment from Stilico, who ruled in the West, under the name of Honorius, Rufinus secretly invited the barbarians to invade the empire. The Huns crossed the Don, came down from Caucasus, laid waste Armenia, Cappadocia, Cilicia, and Syria, making even Antioch tremble; while the Goths, under Alaric, passed the Danube and poured into the provinces lying between the Adriatic and Constantinople.—In this situation of affairs, the minister established his own credit with Arcadius, as a man of wonderful abilities, and expected speedily to obtain the honour for which he panted. But Stilico, having in the mean time opposed the barbarians in the West, with such vigour as to make them sue for peace, immediately marched against Alaric, and, with a large army, partly composed of troops belonging to Arcadius, came up with him on the plains of Thessaly. When on the point of engaging, Arcadius's troops were ordered to withdraw from the rest, and return to Constantinople—an order which Rufinus had dictated, to embarrass his rival. Stilico (who was now obliged to retreat) sent these troops

back, under the command of a Gothic officer, properly tutored. Arcadius, accompanied by Rufinus, whom he was to nominate as his colleague on that very day, went out of Constantinople to receive the homage of these troops on their return; when, on a signal from the commander, they set upon Rufinus and killed him. Eutropius, the eunuch, succeeded him as minister, and was equally a scourge to the state and the people.

Alaric, after the retreat of Stilico, fell upon Greece, took Athens, and desolated Peloponnesus. That country belonged to the eastern empire, but Stilico, who had reinforced his army, went thither to attack the Goths, and actually had nearly ruined Alaric, though the latter escaped with all his booty. In return for this favour conferred on the East, Eutropius caused Stilico to be declared the enemy of the empire, for having attacked the barbarians in Greece! Not satisfied with this, he entered into a treaty with Alaric, and even procured for this invader the government of eastern Illyria. To be brief, the eunuch, who carried his presumption so far, that he one day threatened to banish the empress Eudoxia from the palace, was named consul. Eudoxia, however, at length accomplished his ruin, and he was put to death.

Gainas, a Goth by blood, one of the generals who had assisted in accomplishing the fall of Eutropius, rebelled against Arcadius, in the year 400, and marched towards Constantinople. Such was the imbecility of the government, that the emperor was obliged to treat with him, to continue him in his command, and to make him consul! His countrymen in the empire, led by the motives of interest, had embraced the Christian religion, but being mostly Arians, they were not permitted to have places of worship. Gainas therefore demanded a church for himself and his people, but such influence had churchmen now acquired, that the voice of St. Chrysostom prevailed over that of the Emperor!—and the Goths again took up arms. Many lives were lost, but Gainas was at last obliged to withdraw from Constantinople; and having retired towards the Danube, was attacked, and he and his army destroyed by the Huns.

Alaric did not remain long at rest in Illyria. In 401, having been proclaimed King of the Visigoths by his army, he prepared to penetrate into Italy, and make himself master of Rome; but, having been twice deceived by faithless treaties, he was reduced to the brink of ruin, and, for the present, obliged to abandon his design. In the meantime the empire experienced an unexpected invasion of the

Goths
when
were
they
this
It
of ba
Gaul
ancie
given
Lorr
motio
in wh
derers
Danu
horde
Augu
Boher
Alans
along
Theod
for hir
in the
The
barbari
like a
of Burg
try of t
settled
The
enemie
soldier,
acknow
Spain,
the sam
treaty w
him for
with his
curred.
that his

Goths, about 200,000 of whom, under Radagaisas, poured into Italy, where they were hailed as deliverers by those of the Romans who were still attached to Paganism. After much slaughter on both sides, they were at last defeated (anno 405) by Stilico, who was aided in this contest by Huns and Goths.

Italy was scarcely freed from this enemy, when a dreadful irruption of barbarians, Alans, Vandals, and Suevi, overwhelmed the power in Gaul. The Vandals, who were of Gothic origin, by mixing with the ancient inhabitants, had in some measure become Germans, and had given their name to different nations—as Burgundians, Rugii, Heruli, Lombards, Angli (English), Thuringians. Those who were now in motion inhabited the country of Pannonia, the province of the empire in which Stilico was born. The Suevi, originally a nation of wanderers, had occupied the countries between the Elbe, the Vistula, the Danube, and the Baltic; but, being afterwards divided into different hordes, such of them as retained the name of Suevi in the time of Augustus, dwelt east of the Rhine, but were compelled to retire into Bohemia, of part of which they were deprived by the Vandals. The Alans, from the time they had been driven from the Don, wandered along the Danube. They had been of great service in the armies of Theodosius and Stilico, but perceiving that those whom they served for hire were unable to defend themselves, they resolved to participate in the spoils of the empire.

These nations, joined by a number of Huns, Sarmatians, and other barbarians, in their march, crossed the Rhine near Mentz, and spread like a torrent to the Pyrenees. They were followed by a multitude of Burgundians, who settled in Helvetia, and afterwards in the country of the Sequani and Edui—also by an immense number of Alemains, settled on the banks of the Rhine, from Basle to Mentz.

The army in Britain, terrified by the proximity of such a deluge of enemies, and despairing of reinforcements, proclaimed a common soldier, of the name of Constantius, emperor. He was afterwards acknowledged in Gaul; his son Constans made himself master of Spain, and Honorius was compelled to receive him as colleague. At the same time, (anno 408,) Alaric, who, in consequence of some new treaty with Stilico, had been for three years expecting to be joined by him for the conquest of Illyria, tired with waiting, marched to Italy with his army, and demanded payment for the expenses he had incurred. After some debate in the senate, Stilico, who maintained that his claim was just, promised that 4000 pounds weight of gold

should be given to him, and he retired with his troops to Noricum (in Bavaria and Austria). This transaction cost Stilico his life, who, with all his ambition, was an able general. Olympius, a courtier, who owed his elevation to Stilico, persuaded the emperor that the minister aimed at the throne, and that he was the author of the invasion of the empire by the barbarians; and, gaining over the troops then at Pavia, he first caused all Stilico's relations to be massacred in a mutiny, and then procuring an order for that purpose from the emperor, ordered the minister himself to be seized at Ravenna, with his son, and put to death.

Olympius, enriched with the spoils of Stilico, governed with the same unbounded power as his predecessor, but with less judgment. He is praised by Symmachus, Augustin, and other ecclesiastical writers; but the laws he passed (for the laws of Honorius were those of the minister) in favour of churchmen, account for their eulogiums. —Appeals to the bishops in all civil causes were now authorized; their decision was final; and the civil magistrates were obliged to execute the sentence! —Pagans and heretics were excluded from all offices; —(when Julian excluded dissenters, the clergy talked of the hardship and wickedness of depriving men of their civil rights; but now that the same conduct had a different direction it became highly meritorious;) —the Catholics were put in possession of all the churches; all the pagan solemnities were abolished; the execution of these orders was committed to the bishops; and the public officers were commanded to second them, under the penalty of twenty pounds weight of gold; the disturbers of the Catholics were ordered to be put to death, and all who opposed their tenets to be banished. In the year 409, however, the emperor found himself obliged to revoke the law which excluded pagans from holding offices.

The gold promised to Alaric not having been furnished to him agreeably to engagement, and a demand which he made of it having been treated with contempt, he quitted Noricum (in 409) with his army, crossed Italy with rapidity, arrived at the gates of Rome, made himself master of the Tiber, cut off all supplies, and reduced it to the greatest extremity. Deputies were at last sent out to treat offering to submit, on condition that disgraceful terms should not be imposed, but declaring, in that event, the Roman people only desired to be led to action! Alaric, despising this gasconade, demanded all the wealth of Rome. "What will you leave, then, to the inhabitants?" said the deputies—"Their lives," replied Alaric, fiercely. They agreed to

giving
dread
by
great
E
noti
O
with
ing
nee
year
the
acco
be h
short
estab
coun
dale
enter
which
gon a
Alar
Honor
which
much
suspe
ruined
Jovius
propo
again
Roman
room
that A
Honor
enemy
great
in a
city
Had
victory,
he wished

give him 5000 lbs. weight of gold, 30,000 lbs. of silver, and the children of the principal citizens as hostages; and the terms being ratified by the emperor Honorius, who now resided at Ravenna, as a place of greater safety than either Rome or Milan, Alaric retired.

Britain, wasted by the Scots and Picts, was now abandoned, and notice sent to the inhabitants to defend themselves.

Constans, the son of the usurper Constantius, was at this time at war with Gerontius, his best general. The Alans, Suevi, and Vandals, taking advantage of the dissensions among the Romans, passed the Pyrenees, and ravaged Spain with the most barbarous ferocity for a whole year. Plague and famine were added to these calamities, and such was the scarcity, that men devoured one another. The barbarians having accomplished their conquest, at last divided it among them, began to be humanized, behaved with mildness to the inhabitants; and, in a short time, their reputation for fidelity and justice was so firmly established, that many of the natives who had fled returned to the country, where all were at last confounded under the name of Vandals.—Gerontius, the opponent of Constans, having promoted their enterprize, they left the Romans the country on this side the Ebro, which is called New Castile, from Toledo and the kingdom of Arragon and Valencia, as far as ancient Saguntum.

After the retreat of Alaric from Rome, as has already been noticed, Honorius and the infatuated Romans, thought no more of the treaty which they had concluded with him. Olympius, the minister, was so much occupied with the ruin and destruction of all whom he hated or suspected, business of real moment was neglected. He was at last ruined in his turn by an intrigue of eunuchs, and was succeeded by Jovius, a man equally weak and worthless, who rejected some equitable proposals made by Alaric; in consequence of which that conqueror again made his appearance at the gates of Rome, and compelled the Romans to receive Attalus, the prefect of the city, as emperor, in the room of Honorius. Attalus, however, committed so many blunders, that Alaric soon deposed him and again began to negotiate with Honorius. Sarus, a Gothic captain in the army of the latter, but an enemy of Alaric, broke off the negotiation, by attacking and killing a great number of the Goths, while the conferences were open. Alaric, in a rage, laid siege to Rome (anno 410) for the third time, took the city and gave it up to be pillaged.

Had Alaric wished it, he might certainly have followed up his victory, by taking Ravenna, and reigned in Italy; but it is thought he wished rather to establish himself in Africa, after pillaging Sicily.

His army had partly embarked, when his fleet was destroyed in his sight, by a dreadful storm. He died at Casentia, before he had time to repair this disaster, leaving his conquests to Ataulfus, his brother-in-law, and a worthy successor.

Ataulfus wished to obtain a settlement in the empire, and to marry Placidia, the sister of Honorius, who had been a captive of Alaric. He concluded a treaty with the emperor, was deceived, according to custom, and in revenge laid waste the country of Gaul, took Narbonne and Toulouse, and having gained the affections of the princess, married her. A settlement was then granted him in Spain, in which he was scarcely confirmed when he was murdered by one of his equeries.

About the same time that the Goths obtained this settlement, Honorius was obliged to yield to the Burgundians a part of their conquests in Gaul.

During these revolutions in Europe, Africa was distracted with violent dissensions. The emperor published new edicts against the Donatists, declaring whoever attempted to change the faith guilty of a capital offence. In the East, Arcadius was also occupied in ecclesiastical squabbles. His wife, who ruled him, died in 404, and himself in 408, leaving the empire to his son, Theodosius the younger, then seven years of age.

Ataulfus was succeeded by Sigeric, who, having murdered the children of the former, was put to death by his subjects, after reigning seven days. The Visigoths elected Wadia in his stead, who concluded a treaty with the Romans, and in their cause defeated the Vandals and Alans; and, as a recompense, received in exchange for his former possessions Aquitain Secunda and Novin Populania, [Poitou, Saintongue, Pericard, Bordelois, Angenois, Angoumois, and Gascony,] besides the city of Toulouse, which he made his capital. (To his new possessions he gave the name of Gothia, and the Goths held it 88 years, till the invasion of Clovis.)

About the year 410, the Franks, according to some historians, settled in the country situated between Maestricht and the confluence of the Maese and the Waal. Others ascribe the foundation of the French monarchy to Clodian, in 438. The Franks, who, from the time of Gordian, had made frequent incursions into Gaul, were a collection of several confederate German tribes, between the Rhine, the Maine, and the Weser, and had united in defence of their liberty against the Romans.

Constantius, the only general in the army of Honorius who was

not
of A
wife
child
TH
and
But J
and I
having
plan,
Const
was p
Aetius
First,
under
fire an
Bonifac
them.
of Plac
In a ba
mortal
took th
The co
his digni
Gaul,
ravage o
tion of t
fury of s
Romans,
seized up
to him, th
time plur
retained p
Bœtica, an
they cross
where but
In the e
Nestorius,
mother of
mined othe

royed in his
he had time
his brother-

and to marry
e of Alaric.
according to
took Nar-
the princess,
in, in which
one of his

settlement,
of their con-

tracted with
against the
with guilty of
ed in eccle-
4, and him-
the younger,

red the chil-
after reigning
, who con-
defeated the
exchange for
lania, [Poi-
amois, and
his capital.
l the Goths

historians,
confluence
ation of the
no, from the
ul, were a
the Rhine,
their liberty

is who was

not chosen from among the barbarians, married Placidia, the widow of Ataulfus, and sister of the emperor, in 421, and on him and his wife the imperial dignity was conferred by Honorius, who had no child. Constantius died the same year, and Honorius in 423.

Theodosius, who had not acknowledged the title of Constantius and Placidia, wished to re-unite the two empires in his own person. But John, secretary of state to Honorius, having assumed the purple, and liberated the slaves, in order to form them into an army, and having solicited the assistance of the Huns, Theodosius altered his plan, and sent an army to the West, with Valentinian, the son of Constantius. John was taken and beheaded, and Valentinian III. was proclaimed emperor. Rivalship between two of his generals, Aetius and Boniface, caused each of them to rebel in his turn. First, Boniface, who invited the Vandals out of Spain into Africa, under their king Genseric, where they laid waste the country with fire and sword. The state, unable to repel the invaders, restored Boniface to favour, who endeavoured then, but in vain, to expel them. Aetius, afraid of his rival's power, who enjoyed the favour of Placidia, the mother of the emperor, raised the standard of revolt. In a battle which followed between the generals, Boniface received a mortal wound, though his army defeated that of Aetius, who then took the road to Pannonia, to implore the assistance of the Huns. The court, struck with a panic, sent after him, and restored him to his dignities. Such is the reward of revolt in a tottering state!

Gaul, exposed a prey to avaricious magistrates, as well as to the ravage of the barbarians, had its miseries aggravated by an insurrection of the peasants, who, in a body, ravaged the country with the fury of savages. The Visigoths broke the treaty concluded with the Romans, and renewed the war. In 438, Clodius, king of the Franks, seized upon Cambray, Tournay, and Amiens, which was then ceded to him, the Romans being unable to expel him. Treves was a fourth time plundered by the Franks, who also took Cologne. Genseric retained possession of the best part of Africa. The Suevi subdued Bœtica, and those countries which the Vandals had abandoned when they crossed into Africa. In one word, nothing was to be seen any where but massacres, revolutions, and dismemberments of the empire.

In the east, Theodosius was occupied with new theological quarrels. Nestorius, bishop of Constantinople, taught that *Mary was not the mother of God, but the mother of Christ*. The church having determined otherwise, he was, of course, a heretic. In 435, the emperor

ordered all the books of the Nestorians to be burnt; prohibited, under confiscation of goods, the granting any place of worship to these heretics; and, in cases of obstinacy, decreed the punishment of death. All the clergy who held this heterodox opinion were driven from their churches, and the laity were excommunicated; and, as a farther evidence of the piety of Theodosius, a law was passed by which the possessions of ecclesiastics and monks, who died without heirs, should go to the churches and monasteries. Those who could pass such laws could be little removed from idiocy.

The barbarians, in the meantime (anno 441), continued to gain ground—Carthage was taken by Genseric, who created a large navy, and carried terror and desolation into Sicily. Theodosius, or rather the eunuch Chrysaphus, exhausted the public resources in fitting out 1100 sail of ships to attack the Vandal, who contrived to bring on a tedious negotiation, in the course of which, the Roman army being weakened, the Huns attacked the empire; and the consequence was, Genseric obtained his own terms, and was acknowledged sovereign of Africa, the barbarians in the interim pouring into the empire on all sides.

Attila, whose genius equalled his ambition, had formed boundless plans of conquest, and subjected to his power all the countries from the Baltic on the one hand, to the eastern ocean on the other. He had received ambassadors from China, hemmed in the Roman empire, and threatened its annihilation. Theodosius conferred on him the title of General of the Romans, which he deigned to accept; but with the reservation of his right to make war upon them if they did not act as he might wish! He soon after exercised this reserved right. In 447, Thrace, Dacia, and Mœsia, suffered fresh ravages from the Huns: seventy cities were stormed by them, and two armies sent to oppose them were defeated. Peace was then bought by the Romans, at the price of 6000 lbs. weight of gold, and an annual tribute of 2000 lbs. The money could not be collected without the most grievous oppressor and violence—wealthy families were reduced to indigence, and many persons destroyed themselves in despair. The ambassadors of the Huns were loaded with presents; and, if Attila wished to enrich any of his officers, he needed only to send them to Constantinople! Theodosius, however, had the consoling approbation of churchmen, and persuaded himself that, in attending to their senseless logomachies, he was more profitably employed than in minding worldly concerns. A council of 130 bishops, assembled at

An
and
me
east
tion
fata
T
siste
to M
In
havi
effec
Hon
who
king
sent,
her th
Goths
to des
army
march
to des
Gaul,
These
covere
the ey
threate
Burgun
ments
followe
But be
with a
At last,
this ch
Romans
died in
pieces b
recovere
the divic
the Less

Antioch, condemned the doctrine of the two natures in one person, and pronounced some wholesome anathemas, depositions, and banishments, against the Eutychis—a kind of amusement in which the eastern emperors were much occupied from this time till the destruction of the Greek empire, and which produced internal quarrels as fatal as the arms of the barbarians.

Theodosius died in 450, on his return from a pious pilgrimage. His sister, Pulcheria, assumed the reins of government, and gave her hand to Marcian.

In the west, the empire was daily growing more feeble. Genseric having quarrelled with the king of the Visigoths, Theodoric, the more effectually to harass him, invited Attila to penetrate into Gaul. Honoria, the daughter of the empress, Placidia, mother of Valentinian, who had taken the veil, carried on a secret correspondence with the king of the Huns, and had promised to give him her hand. Attila sent, in consequence, to demand the princess in marriage, and with her the half of the empire. By negotiating with the Romans and Goths at the same time, Attila concealed the resolution he had formed to destroy both, till he took the field (anno 451) at the head of an army of 500,000 men, composed of various nations, led by their kings, marched along the Danube, and passed the Rhine. It is impossible to describe the havoc and devastation which he spread throughout Gaul, between the Rhine, the Seine, the Maine, and the Moselle. These countries were entirely ruined, the towns burnt, and the fields covered with slain: Aetius, the Roman general, succeeded in opening the eyes of Theodoric, the king of the Visigoths, to the danger that threatened him: he joined the Romans, as did also the Franks, the Burgundians, Armorica, and other nations which had obtained settlements in the empire. The most bloody battle that was ever fought followed: Attila was worsted, and obliged to retire into Pannonia. But before the Romans had time to breathe, returned (anno 452) with a fresh army, poured into Italy, and spread an universal alarm. At last, Valentinian sent Pope Leo to Attila (observe the influence of this churchman) to beg for peace. A truce was concluded, the Romans agreeing to pay a tribute, and the conqueror withdrew. He died in the year following, and his too extended dominion soon fell in pieces by dissensions among his sons; but the enfeebled empire never recovered from the shock he had given it. Several settlements out of the divided territories of Attila were formed in Illyria, Mœsia, Dacia, the Lesser Scythia (at the mouths of the Danube), and were received

as allies by that empire which they were tearing to pieces; but the Ostrogoths, subjects of Attila, were the principal gainers by this revolution. Marcian granted them all Pannonia, from Upper Mœsia to Noricum, and from Dalmatia to the Danube—and they afterwards obtained possession of all Italy.

Those internal dissensions, originating in, and fostered by, the vices of the court, which had primarily brought on the evils of which I have attempted to give a faint outline, and which had now well nigh extinguished the Roman power throughout the provinces, were still continued. Valentinian debauched the wife of Maximus, a man of rank and power; in revenge for which the latter contrived that Aetius, the only person who could protect the emperor, should be suspected of traitorous intentions; Valentinian killed this general with his own hand, and was soon after assassinated by the artifice of Maximus (anno 455), who then mounted the throne. He compelled Valentinian's widow to marry him: in revenge she invited Genseric to attack Rome; the Vandals obeyed the summons, and speedily embarked; Maximus was assassinated, in attempting to fly; Genseric arrived, and Rome was given up to be pillaged, after which he returned to Africa with his booty. Avitus assumed the purple; Count Recimer, the son of a prince of the Suevi, excited a sedition against him, took him prisoner, and, to disqualify him from reigning, caused him to be consecrated a bishop! He died soon after, and the throne remained vacant for some months. What a change!

Recimer now caused Majorianus to be elected emperor, hoping to govern under his name, but finding himself disappointed, formed a plot against him (anno 461) and destroyed him. He then set up in his room one Severus, but who this phantom was is not known. He disappeared, but by what means is equally a secret, and Recimer governed the state with absolute authority during a year and a half. Anthemius was now (anno 467) appointed emperor. Recimer married one of his daughters, but being counteracted by him in some of his projects, he revolted, beat the troops that opposed him, took the city of Rome (anno 472), gave it up to be pillaged by the soldiers, and caused Anthemius to be put to death.

In the prophetic account (as will be shown hereafter), this sacking of Rome put an end to the western empire. It is true that the imperial head had a nominal, but only a nominal existence, till the fourth year after; but the power was gone, the light of the imperial sun was set.

Olyb
after,) known
eastern
from th
Romulu
August
of the
Gaul, o
quired t
the bar
allies, d
services,
dier, for
himself
marched
quitted t
subdued
Such v
smitten,
stars;" s
politic of

II
" And
saying wi
earth, from
are yet to
We hav
brought u
kingdom,
more drea
sidered as
therefore c
of their pe
troduced v
heaven here
church, or

Olybius, the next phantom appointed by Recimer, (who died shortly after,) reigned only a few months. He was succeeded by Glycerius, known only by name, who was dethroned by Nepos, an officer of the eastern emperor, in 474. In the following year Nepos was driven from the throne by the patrician Orestes, who appointed his own son Romulus, surnamed Augustus, but commonly, in contempt, called Augustulus. At this period, all that remained of the mighty empire of the west was confined to Italy, Dalmatia, and a small part of Gaul, of which the nominal head had so slight a hold, that it only required the attempt to be made to dispossess him entirely. In 476, the barbarians who served in the Roman armies with the name of allies, demanded one-third of the lands as a recompense for their services, and, being refused by Orestes, chose Odoacer, a private soldier, for their leader. He attacked Pavia, where Orestes had shut himself up, took the place, put the patrician to death, and then marched to Ravenna, where, finding that Augustulus had voluntarily quitted the purple, he gave him his life, but confined him. He then subdued all Italy, of which he settled himself king!

Such were the events by which the "third part of the sun was smitten, and the third part of the moon, and the third part of the stars;" so that they ceased to diffuse their light throughout the heaven politic of the western empire, called in this book the third part.

INTRODUCTION TO THE WOE TRUMPETS.

"And I beheld, and heard an eagle flying through the mid-heaven, saying with a loud voice, Woe, Woe, Woe to the dwellers on the earth, from the other voices of the trumpets of the three angels which are yet to sound," Rev. viii. 13.

We have seen, by the trumpets of the four former angels, evils brought upon the church, and upon the empire of Daniel's fourth kingdom, than which imagination can scarcely conceive any thing more dreadful. These, however, terrible as they were, are considered as light and trivial, compared to those that follow. They are therefore detailed in the prophecy without any particular intimation of their peculiar severity; but those about to be proclaimed are introduced with a warning awfully solemn, whether we consider the *heaven* here mentioned as referring to the rule and government of the church, or to that system of dominion which was to take place in

Europe after the imperial sun was eclipsed. "Woe, woe, woe to the inhabitants of the earth!" That the church is called upon to attend to the warning cannot be doubted; for the whole prophecy was given to show unto "*Christ's servants things that were shortly to come to pass*," Rev. i. 1. But the *heaven-politic* appears to be here particularly intended; for the fourth trumpet had proclaimed the extinction of the light of the third part of this heaven, and then follows this *eagle* in the *mid-heaven*, *Messuranemati*, (not *the midst of heaven*, as in the common version,) denouncing three-fold woe to "the inhabitants of the earth," *i. e.*, to those dwelling under the political heaven. This phrase, *mid-heaven*, does not mean the air, the middle region between heaven and earth, but the *meridian*, that part of the heaven in which the sun has his highest exaltation in his (apparent) diurnal revolution; and in the astronomy of the ancients always meant, that point or degree of the zodiac which coincided with the meridian, whether the sun was then in that point or not. The mid-heaven was called the cusp of the tenth astronomical house—for the whole zodiac was considered as divided into twelve planetary houses—and this tenth house being the highest, was allotted to the sun, as the king among the planets. Hence this was called the regal house, the house of rule and dominion, and in astrology denoted the ruling power.

In the common Greek text, we read *Angelou*, *angel*, in place of *Aetou*, *eagle*. The latter is the reading of the Vulgate, Syriac, and Æthiopic versions, the Complutensian edition, several of the fathers, and good MSS.; and by every rule of fair criticism has the best right to be admitted as the genuine text. One of the readings is a corruption. It is difficult to conceive how a transcriber could substitute *eagle* for *angel*, the former word having occurred only once before in the whole book, and that as far back as chap. iv. 7., so that the recollection of the word cannot be supposed to have been floating even faintly in his mind, when transcribing the viii. chapter. It is otherwise with the word *angel*. No mistake could be more natural, when writing about *heaven*, than to substitute for *eagle* a word of such frequent recurrence as *angel*.*

It is also deserving of notice, that John does not say simply *an eagle*, but *henos aetou*, *one eagle*. An eagle, in symbolical lan-

* Montanus also has *henos aetou*. But some read *angelou hos aetou*. See Griesbach's Testament, vol. ii. p. 615.

guage, i
sovereig
immedi
given, i
the eag
pire is a
sword o
and cen
of which
selves, a
can sub
clay, Da
the reign
that had
form of
of the so
his assum
equivalen
kind.

But be
peculiar
any pote
might cho
empire,"
the Messi
dicial infi
cular noti
looking fo
that of the
limitation,
which are

Another
the latter p
to profess
very power
that were
another set
notice, thes
possessed i
kings, and h

guage, is *sovereignty*, and was peculiarly the symbol of the Roman sovereignty. But the Prophet had given a statement, in the verse immediately preceding, which, without such an intimation as here given, might have been understood to amount to a declaration that the eagle was dead. The *eagle*, however, or the *beast*, as this empire is also called, recovered from the wound inflicted on him by the sword of the barbarians. The hierarchy still remained as a nucleus and centre around which the discordant and heterogeneous materials of which this empire was now composed, were to arrange themselves, and by which such a cohesion of them was to be formed as can subsist among pieces of iron joined together by such cement as clay, Dan. ii. 40—43. The eagle yet had an existence in prospect: the reign of "one head," its eight, was to follow all the calamities that had been before described; and the appearance of this "one form of the eagle in the mid-heaven,"—that is, "in the possession of the sovereign power,"—his own annunciation of his existence,—his assumption of dominion as a ruler, is in the text declared to be equivalent to a denunciation of the most dreadful miseries to mankind.

But besides this, something farther seems to be intimated by the peculiar expression *one eagle*. It was not a plurality of empires, or any potentate, whom commentators, to suit their own hypothesis, might choose to upbraid with the title, but "one particular predicted empire," that was to be the distinguished and prominent adversary of the Messiah's kingdom, and, as such, the procuring cause of the judicial inflictions denounced in this prophecy. This deserves particular notice; for we are by this limitation to *one*, prevented from looking for this adversary, the Antichrist, in any other empire than that of the *eagle*: and had commentators paid proper attention to this limitation, they would have suppressed many of their lucubrations, which are worse than irrelevant.

Another dominion was to succeed that of the emperor's, and like the latter part of them, to call itself Christian—a power which was to profess to regulate its conduct by the precepts of the gospel. This very power, though thus warned, was to be the cause of all the evils that were to follow, for though the chief instruments were to be another set of men, of whom we shall soon have occasion to take notice, these had no power of their own, nor ought they ever to have possessed it, in civil matters; but they received power from the ten kings, and had their rise as a body, called by Paul, "the Man of Sin

—the Son of Perdition," 2 Thess. ii. 3, at the same time with the ten kingdoms, Rev. xvii. 12, 13. They had, as we have already seen, been gradually strengthening themselves, and adding to their own importance, even from the Apostolic age; but it was only on the extinction of the imperial power, which was the *let* or *hinderance* to the complete revelation of the mystery of iniquity, which was already at work in the days of the Apostles, that "the man of sin" ascended his throne, by "Satanical machinations, with all power and lying wonders." The nature of these delusions, and the judgments which followed, form the subjects of the three following Trumpets. But as it will much facilitate our future progress, I beg leave, before proceeding to them, to call the attention of the reader to

PAUL'S PROPHECY CONCERNING THE MAN OF SIN.

"Now, we beseech you, brethren, concerning this coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our gathering together unto him, that ye be not soon shaken in your judgment, nor troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter, as from us, (*intimating*) that the day of Christ is at hand. Let no one deceive you by any means, for there must first come a falling away, and *the man of sin* be revealed, *the son of perdition*, who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called god, or that is worshipped; so that he, as God, sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God."

"Do you not remember, that when I was with you I told you these things? and ye know what hindereth now; so that he will be revealed in his time: for the secret* of iniquity is already working; only there is one who now hindereth until he be taken out of the way, and then shall that wicked (*man of sin*) be revealed. The Lord shall consume with the breath of his mouth, and with the brightness

* The erroneous ideas and uses of the word *mystery* are noticed by the author in the following pages; but whether *mystery* or *secret* be used here, the Apostle's meaning is evident:—The *import* or *design* of the prophetic language and figures respecting the enemy of Christ and his people, hitherto not understood, was begun to be unfolded, in the appearances which some then made, and would be fully revealed in the *man of sin*:—In him would be displayed the *mystery of the Wicked One*, who was seen, in the spirit of prophecy, *great in power, spreading himself like a green bay tree; yet passing so completely away, as when sought for not to be found*: (compare Ps. xxxvii., particularly ver. 35, 36, and Dan. iv. 10, 21, with Rev. xvii. 5.)—But the Apostle seems, in this passage, to point directly to the *secret* or *mystery* of Isaiah's language, (xl. 4,) where he declares that "the Root of David (the opener of the sealed book,) shall slay the Wicked One with the breath of his lips."

* This Epist.

of his (*own*) coming shall destroy him whose coming is according to the working of Satan, with all power and signs, and lying miracles, and with all manner of unrighteous fraud, among those who perish, because they received not the love of the truth that they might be saved. And for this cause God will send them strong delusions, that they may believe a lie, that they all may be condemned who believe not the truth, but took pleasure in such unrighteousness," 2 Thess. ii. 1—12.

In the preceding chapter the Apostle had been speaking to the Thessalonians of the second coming of the "Messiah, with his mighty angels;" in flaming fire to take vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the glad news of "our Lord Jesus Christ;" after which he goes on, in the twelve verses quoted above, to give them some instructions concerning "this coming of our Lord Jesus Christ," and our gathering together unto him, that they might remain "unshaken" in the credit they had given to what he had before taught them on this subject, and not to give heed to some who wished to persuade them "that this day of Christ was then at hand." The doctrine which these men were endeavouring to propagate, but for this seasonable correction from the Apostle, might have produced the most pernicious consequences. Had it received general and implicit credit, it would have led to a neglect of those social duties, which are every where enjoined throughout the New Testament, as indispensable to the Christian character; for who would have thought it necessary to "be diligent in business," that he might be able to "provide things honest in the sight of all men," and be "ready to distribute" on every proper occasion, if the day was just at hand in which the fruit of his labour would no longer be useful either to himself or others? "Let no one deceive you by any means," says Paul, "for there must first come a falling away, (such an apostasy as has been amply described under the third Trumpet,) and the man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition."

Who is this "man of sin"—this "son of perdition?"—One "who opposeth, and who exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped." The Thessalonians had been before instructed respecting the power of whom the Apostle was speaking; but if they had not, this description would have been sufficient for their information; for the sealed book had been opened before this Epistle was written,* and the words are taken almost *verbatim* from the character

* This Epistle affords some of the many proofs to be found in the writings of

given in the sealed book of "the king who was to do according to his own will," Dan. ix. 36; "He shall exalt and magnify himself above every god;" and again, (ver. 37,) "He will not regard any god; for he will magnify himself above all."

Many Protestant commentators, in their zeal to expose the flagrant wickedness of the See of Rome, (for they are almost unanimous in considering the Pope as "the man of sin,*) have considered the Lord God as intended both by Paul and Daniel, by the words, *every god—all that is called god*. These expressions, however, do not mean Jehovah, but *every king—any potentate*. (See Ps. lxxxvi. 1—6, and John, x. 34, 35.) Nor does *worshipped, sebasma*, here mean *adored*, but *venerated*—entitled to reverence and respectful submission. The title of the Roman emperors was *sebastos, venerable*, expressed in Latin by the word *augustus*. This is the word employed in Acts xxv. 21. Paul's appeal was to *sebastos*.—The supreme power, then, is that which is *sebasma, venerated, worshipped*.

But this is not the whole of his character. He not only treats kings and magistrates with contempt, and exalts himself above them, but, "as God, places himself in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God." In the exercise of that usurped power, by which he makes himself a king, he erects his throne in "the temple," that is, in "the church of God." (See 1 Cor. iii. 16, 17, and 2 Cor. vi. 16.) It is in virtue of this pretended spiritual authority that he claims a higher reverence than that which is due even to the potentates of the earth, and insists that he is their superior; but as the Scriptures acknowledge no authority higher than theirs, except the sovereign power of the King of kings, it is plain that, by this act of presumption, he usurps the seat of him who is alone exalted King upon the holy hill of Zion, Ps. ii. 6—he exhibits himself as God. In fact, whoever arrogates to himself a power not only to add to the laws of God, but to alter them, or dispense with them, makes himself his superior; for he who has power to nullify the commands of another, must be more than his equal.

the Apostles, that "the deep things of God were revealed unto them by his Spirit," respecting both the kingdom of Christ and of Antichrist—things which were veiled from the wise and the learned of this world, that their folly might be manifest.

* There are exceptions, of which some curious instances are given by Bishop Newton in his *twenty-second Dissertation*; where the reader will also find some account of the strange explanations of the passage now under consideration, which have been given by the Roman Catholic writers. I pass them over, as our present business is to ascertain, not *what is not*, but *what is*, the genuine meaning of this prophecy.

D
for "
"son
"bea
the sp
of inc
only,
manif
put for
import
but the
may b
individ
This
itself.
false ch
which i
up to "
"Now
1 Cor. x
Col. i. 1
the head
who fell
the chara

* A rec
for Antich
ledges both
at present,
but in worl
good work
† In Scri
woman, and
a woman, th
The true ch
true church
Apollyon, th
liness; the
the dominion
but to save;
goeth about,
are the child
† The ten
sense, but the
latter is here
magnifies an
that they then

Does the epithet "the man of sin" mean some individual? No; for "the little horn" or *king*, mentioned in Daniel, which is Paul's "son of perdition," or "man of sin," and John's "Antichrist,"* or "beast that ascendeth out of the abyss," is to continue in power for the space of 1260 prophetic years. Does it mean, then, a succession of individuals, as the Popes? No; not the succession of the head only, but the *whole man of sin—the body with its head*. This is manifest from the style of Daniel's prophecies; for in them *king* is put for *kingdom*, and in the Revelation, the word *king* has the same import;—the head or sovereign of the kingdom not being intended, but the whole power, throughout the kingdom, whatever that kingdom may be.—The apostacy was not to be that of one man, or of a few individuals, but that of a collective body.

This will appear farther evident, from an examination of the name itself. The "man of sin," like most other appellations given to the false church, is borrowed, with some alteration, from the true church, which is called (2 Tim. iii. 17) the "man of God,"† and is growing up to "a perfect man, unto the full stature of Christ," Eph. iv. 13. "Now the body of *this man of God* is not one member, but many," 1 Cor. xii. 14; and the head of this body, the true church, is Christ, Col. i. 18. So also the man of sin is not one member but many, and the head of this body, the false church is the Pope, the *blazing star* who fell from heaven under the third Trumpet; for to no other does the character, in its fullest latitude apply.‡ Christ's opponent is also

* A recent Commentator tells us that the church of Rome is not Antichristian, for *Antichrist denies the Father and the Son*, 1 John iv. 2, 3, but *she acknowledges both!*—In opposition to this unprotestant, Antichristian doctrine, I shall, at present, only urge the reasoning of Paul, "They profess that they know God, but in works they deny him, being abominable and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate," Titus i. 16.

† In Scripture language the true church is also called a *woman*, a *chaste woman*, and her children are *virgins*; the false church is likewise represented by a *woman*, the reverse of the other character—a *harlot*, and the *mother of harlots*. The true church is a *city, Jerusalem*; the false is also a *city, Babylon*. The true church is the *kingdom of Jesus, the Saviour*; the false, the *kingdom of Apollyon, the Destroyer*. The true church displays the *secret or mystery of godliness*; the false, the *secret or mystery of iniquity*. The true church is under the dominion of a *lion—the lion of the tribe of Judah*, who came not to condemn but to *save*; the false belongs to the *Devil and Satan—the roaring lion*, who goeth about, seeking whom he may *destroy*. The members of the true church are the *children of God*; those of the false, the *children of the Wicked One*.

‡ The ten kings (Rev. xvii. 12) are also the *head of Antichrist*, in a certain sense, but they are not meant by the epithet, "man of sin;" on the contrary, the latter is here put, by a kind of antithesis in opposition to these ten kings;—he magnifies and exalts himself *against them all*. But it is not a little remarkable that they themselves gave him this power, by which he set himself above them.

here called the "son of perdition," *i.e.*, the peculiar and distinguished "heir of perdition;" because, like Judas, he calls himself of the number of his disciples, professing friendship, submission, and respect—betraying, while he kisses the Master. The "man of God," the body of "the second man, the Lord from heaven," 1 Cor. xv. 47, "is the heir of glory;" all the members being "heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ," Rom. viii. 17. The "son of perdition," on the contrary, belongs to the body of "the beast that ascends out of the bottomless pit, and goes into perdition," Rev. xvii. 3—"the heavens and the earth," *i.e.*, the rulers and the ruled in this body politic, being reserved unto fire against the "day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men," 2 Pet. iii. 7—when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven, with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on his adversaries," 2 Thess. i. 7. And here we may remark that, as the body of Christ, of which every believer is "a member in particular," 1 Cor. xii. 27, is not confined to one city, district, or kingdom, but "extends from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth;" so the body of Antichrist is not confined to one city or kingdom; but embraces "peoples, and kindreds, and nations, and tongues;" all "worshipping him whose names are not written in the Lamb's book of life." In short, wherever men presume, on pretence of expediency, or from whatever motive, to dispense with, or alter in the smallest degree, any of the laws which Christ hath given for the government of his house, or to add any commandments or institutions to those of his appointment, "there is the man of sin, sitting in the temple, showing himself that he is God."

"Do ye not remember," says Paul, "that when I was with you, I told you these things? and ye know what hindereth now." This was not the first time that the Apostle had mentioned the coming of "the man of sin;" he had orally imparted it when he was among them, and had informed them what was the present hinderance;—they might therefore rest assured "that he would be revealed in his time;" for already "the secret of iniquity" was at work—the ambitious spirit of Antichrist was operating *under disguise*. In the common English version we read "mystery of iniquity"—the Greek word *mysterion* not being translated at all, but made an English word. The very retention of such a word in a version—a word which, in its English acceptation, has a sense quite different from what it has in the original, is, in itself, a kind of specimen of the "secret of iniquity;" which consists in the wicked purpose hid under some veil. There

is no
havin
the w
the fo
quite
accep
their
the se
cealed
but the
him it
closed,
and ma
iii. 3—
a secre
The
rate, bu
on acco
"let" c
can the
and, till
could ex
or autho
and ther
time"—
Now, he
coeval—
of sin w
ance to

* See s
glish Lex
"I think
passages o
and this I
is but too o
and incom
mysterion
spoken, or
"Now the
doctrine, o
denote that
meaning of
ferred to."

is no necessity, however, that we should charge our translators with having wilfully obscured the truth in this and other passages in which the word *mystery* occurs; but whatever allowances may be made for the force of habit and the prejudices of education, they cannot be acquitted of negligence, in permitting a Greek word, which, in its English acceptation, has a different sense from the original, to find a place in their version. The Greek word *mystery* means *secret* (*the mystery, the secret*, of some particular subject)—something which was concealed, but which when declared is no longer a *mystery* or a *secret*;* but the man of sin has contrived to give it another meaning:—with him it implies a contradiction in terms—something which, when *disclosed*, still remains *unknown*—Divine truths, which, though “revealed and made known unto the sons of men by the Spirit of God,” (Eph. iii. 3–5,) cannot be known by them, but must still remain as much a secret as ever!

The spirit of which the Apostle speaks had already begun to operate, but it worked secretly; it durst not make its true object manifest, on account of the jealousy of “the higher powers.” This was the “let” or “hinderance to the revelation of the son of perdition;” nor can the text allude to any other; for his aim was power—dominion! and, till some change should take place, it was impossible that he could exalt himself above whatever was known by the name of rule or authority. But this hinderance was to be “taken out of the way, and then was that wicked one to be revealed”—then was “his own time”—the time before determined for the revelation of Antichrist. Now, here it is predicted of two very singular events that were to be coeval—a circumstance that deserves particular attention: the man of sin was to be revealed when the then reigning power—the hinderance to his ambition—was taken out of the way. We are told the

* See some judicious Criticisms on this word in *Parkhurst's Greek and English Lexicon*; also *Campbell, Dissertation IX*. The former concludes thus: “I think proper to observe, that I have above carefully taken notice of all the passages of the New Testament in which the term *mysterion, mystery*, occurs; and this I have the rather done, because a *most unscriptural and dangerous sense* is but too often put upon this word, as if it meant somewhat *absolutely unintelligible, and incomprehensible*. A strange mistake! since in almost every text wherein *mysterion* is used, it is mentioned as something which *is revealed, declared, shown, spoken, or which may be known or understood*.”—And Dr. Campbell thus: “Now the term *mysterion*, as has been shown, is always predicated of some doctrine, or of some matter of fact, wherein it is the intention of the writer to denote that the information he gives was either a secret formerly, or is the latent meaning of some type, allegory, figurative description, dream, vision, or fact referred to.”

same thing, but in a different phraseology, in the Revelation, when it is said "the ten kings receive their power in one hour (*i.e.*, at one and the same time) with the beast"—this new kingdom of the little horn; and we learn from the same book, that the rise of these ten, and the seventh head of the Roman empire coincide. In other words, at the period in which the sun is eclipsed in the western empire, as announced by the sounding of the fourth Trumpet, we must look for the revelation of him "whose coming is according to the working of Satan"—him who makes his advances after the manner of the *adversary* (as *ton satana* might be rendered), not openly, but secretly at first, till the obstacles in his way are removed. Then he throws off the mask, struggles openly for power, and asserts his right to rule, with all these accompanying *signs* by which his reign is marked out in this and other prophecies; but especially with this notable mark—"placing himself in the temple of God" (*i.e.*, the church) as a legislator—a power which Christ, the only king, hath not delegated to any man, or set of men upon earth. This is literally coming with the "machinations of Satan," the grand adversary of God and man, who was a liar from the beginning. "Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ," *i.e.*, the anointed King—honouring him with the lips, but, instead of submitting to his rule, setting up the authority of men in opposition to it? This is *Antichrist*; and he may be known wherever he reigns by this character—a character which attaches to every church that has an established creed or a public ritual, enforced on the consciences of men by sanguinary laws—a character which belongs as truly to the meanest *Dissenter* as to the proudest *Hierarchy*, when the former attempts to lord it over our consciences, insisting that we should abstain from what God has not forbidden, or do that which rests on no other authority than the doctrines and commandments of men.

But "the man of sin" comes, not only claiming and exercising the power alluded to above, and accompanied with those *signs* and *marks* that have been put upon him in prophecy, but with "lying miracles, and all manner of unrighteous fraud, among those who perish, because they receive not the love of the truth by which alone they can be preserved." The lying miracles of the church of Rome have been so justly, amply, and ably exposed by numerous commentators, that I shall not take up the reader's time with even a brief detail of them. To her this character belongs almost exclusively. Some sects may, perhaps, be found that call themselves Protestants, and yet are ambi-

tious
of such
of the
Establi
ever th
by inge
ever be
may be
the tru
the tru
1 Thess
served,
by tradi
that ligh
laws in
an impi
the del
rejecting
of sin.

Obs
and bring
him by
the word
adherent
his voice
of her sin
judgment
man, that
men, whe
them, wil
separation
ence, and
of men by
mouth of
arrows wh
subdues th
willing pec
this King
destruction

* From the
destroyed.

tious to share this honour with *the mother of harlots*; but the number of such fanatics, it is to be hoped, is very small. But the other part of the character will, I fear, be found to attach more or less both to Establishments and Dissenters, of almost every description:—when- ever the force of any of the precepts of Christ are evaded or set aside by ingenious glosses, there is *unrighteous fraud* practised; and who- ever belongs to any communion in which this is practised or permitted, may be assured that he is “among those who perish;”—for where the truth is loved, this cannot exist; and it is only “by the love of the truth,” which “worketh *effectually* in them who do believe it,” 1 Thess. ii. 13, that men can escape this iniquitous deceit, or be pre- served, after “they are delivered, from the vain conversation received by tradition from their fathers,” 1 Pet. i. 18. Nor is this a matter of that light moment which those who have presumed to divide Christ’s laws into essentials and non-essentials, persuade men to believe: it is an impiety threatened with judicial blindness—even a strengthening of the delusion, that they may believe *the lie*, and be condemned for rejecting *the truth*, when the Lord shall come to destroy the man of sin.

Observe, “The Lord shall consume Antichrist,” that is, waste him and bring him low, “with the spirit of his mouth,” before he “destroy him by the brightness of his coming.” By the power of the truth, the word that hath gone out of the mouth of the Lord, many of the adherents of Babylon shall be induced to forsake her. Harkening to his voice, they will “come out of her, that they may not be partakers of her sins, and so of her plagues,” Rev. xviii. 4. Persuaded that the judgments denounced against her shall be executed—for God is not a man, that he should lie, and strong is the Lord God who judgeth her—men, when once they know the danger to which their situation exposes them, will “flee” from her as “from the wrath to come.” This separation from the harlot—this consumption of her power and influ- ence, and of the ascendancy which she has obtained over the minds of men by her “unrighteous fraud,” is effected by the spirit of the mouth of Christ, the truths which he hath taught; for these are “the arrows which he sticks fast in the hearts of his enemies,” when he subdues them to himself, making them, from rebels, to become “a willing people in the day of his power.” But those who will not that this King should reign over them, shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence* of the Lord, and from the glory of his

* From that Presence, that Face, every soul that would not hear him shall be destroyed. They shall be scattered; they shall flee from before him; they shall

power, when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, destroying the "man of sin" with the brightness of his coming.

THE FIFTH TRUMPET.

"And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star fallen from heaven unto the earth; and to him was given the key of the pit of the abyss, and he opened the pit of the abyss, and there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by the smoke from the pit.

"And there came out of the smoke locusts against the earth; and unto them was given power as the scorpions of the earth have power. And it was commanded them, that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, nor any herb, nor any tree; but only those men who have not the seal of God in their foreheads. And to them was given not to kill them, but that they should be tormented five months, and their torment (to be) as the torment of a scorpion, when it striketh a man.

"And in those days shall men seek death, and shall not find it; and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them.

"And the resemblances of the locusts were like horses prepared for battle: and for their heads as crowns of gold; and their faces as faces of men; and they had hair as the hair of women; and their teeth were as of lions. And they had breastplates as breastplates of iron; and the sound of their wings as the sound of chariots with many horses running to battle. And they had tails like unto scorpions, and there were stings in their tails, and their power (is) to torment men five months.*

be driven away as smoke; as wax melteth before the fire, so shall the wicked perish from the presence of God. The servants of Belial shall be all of them as thorns thrust away;—they shall be utterly burned with fire in the same place. How is this contrasted with the effect of that Presence to those in whom he shall be glorified? To them it will be attended with such a glorious refreshing as we can conceive by the light of the morning when the sun riseth—a morning without clouds;—and the tender grass springing out of the earth by clear shining after rain. Then shall the fruit of that east of sorrow which was sown in the earth rustle like the trees of Lebanon; and they of the city shall flourish like grass of the earth. They shall be blessed in him, and call him blessed. They shall see his face, and be counted worthy to stand before him, their sins being blotted out. Then shall they be glad, and rejoice before him; yea, they shall rejoice exceedingly. See Acts iii. 19—24; 2 Cor. v. 1—7; Ps. lxxvii. 1—3; lxxii. 16, 17, &c.

* Wakefield reads—"And they are empowered to hurt mankind five months."

"A
name
Apolly
"On
Rev. 12

SE

Ever
exposito
Trumpe
the com
Saracen
as the r
Sergius,
distingui
they tell
Let the
of which
ment tha
some affl
trumpets
seen yet
trumpets
the depre
those bro
and other
admit tha
Rome, th
capital ci
nearest to
other of i
subdue an
nople, the
what pro
emphatic
by the Ro
Other o

"And they had a king over them, the angel of the abyss, whose name in Hebrew is Abaddon, but in Greek he hath his name Apollyon (in English, Destroyer).

"One woe is past. Behold there come two woes more hereafter," Rev. ix. 1—12.

SECTION I.—*Of the Language Employed in this Trumpet.*

Ever since the days of Brightman and Mede, commentators and expositors, with very few exceptions, have referred the woe of this Trumpet to the misery brought upon the Christian world (I here use the common mode of speech) by Mahomet and his countrymen the Saracens. They only differ in this:—some of them consider Mahomet as the star who fell from heaven: others, a monk of the name of Sergius, who assisted him to fabricate his forged revelation, as the distinguished personage here mentioned; and, to fortify their exposition, they tell us that as locusts are numerous, so were the Saracens, &c. Let the reader recur to the introduction of the three Woe Trumpets, of which this is the first, and he will thence draw a convincing argument that Mahomet and the Saracens cannot be here intended; but some affliction more dreadful than anything denounced by the former trumpets, either as to its nature or duration, or both. It has never been yet contested that the awful and solemn manner in which those trumpets are introduced, imports an aggravation of misery: but can the depredations and evils inflicted by these Arabians be compared to those brought on the Roman empire by the Goths, Vandals, Huns, and other barbarians? Those who apply this trumpet to the Saracens admit that, though "they besieged Constantinople, and even plundered Rome, they could not make themselves masters of either of those capital cities. The Greek empire suffered most from them, as it lay nearest to them. They dismembered it of Syria and Egypt, and other of its best and richest provinces; but they were never able to subdue and conquer the whole. As often as they besieged Constantinople, they were repulsed and defeated."* This being the case, with what propriety can the incursions and conquests of the Arabians be emphatically called *a woe*, in comparison with the evils before suffered by the Roman empire?

Other objections, some of which are insuperable, may be opposed

* Newton's Dissertations, vol. III., p. 16.

to such an application of this prophecy. The *star* here spoken of is a ruler in the church or state, in the territory of one or more of Daniel's empires. Mahomet was neither—nor was Sergius: consequently neither of them could fall from that eminence. Such a proposition carries absurdity on the face of it. The star had *fallen* from his sphere—Mahomet, on the contrary, *rose* from obscurity, and became and continued a *bright star*, or rather a *sun*, in that system of political and religious dominion of which he was the founder.

The locusts were not to kill (or *slay*, *Apokteinosin*;) the men who had not the seal of God in their forehead, but only to torment them: —the *Saracens killed many hundred thousands of them*. Those who maintain that the Saracens are intended by the locusts are obliged to be inconsistent. "The locusts," say they,* "were not to kill, but only to torment Not that it could be supposed that the Saracens would not kill many thousands in their incursions—they might kill them as individuals! but they should not kill them as a political body! as a state or empire." What! men enjoy a political existence after they are killed as individuals!—Is it a wonder that infidels should laugh at these absurdities?—It might be remarked here, that no where throughout this prophecy, is the word *men* put for a political body or empire; the men who belong to such bodies are frequently spoken of as either acting or suffering in consequence of their connection with them; but the bodies themselves are always represented under some emblem, or hieroglyphic. But this need not be insisted on, to show the fallacy of the popular interpretation, when we see those who maintain it admitting, afterwards, under the next trumpet, that the four angels "which were prepared for an hour, a day, a month, and a year, *to slay* or kill (*Apokteinosi*) the third part of men, that is, *as before*, the men of the Roman empire,"† means "the four sultanies, or four leaders of the Turks and Othmans."‡ Did these, any more than the former, "kill them as a political body?" They put an end, indeed, to the Constantinopolitan empire; but "the third part," in this book always means the Western empire—the *one eagle*, marked with so much emphasis, as a principal agent, and the procuring cause of the thrice repeated "Woe to the inhabitants of the earth!"

The substitution of *Saracens* for *locusts*, because, in the book of Judges, vii. 12, the people of Arabia are compared to locusts or

* Newton's Dissert., vol. III., p. 101.

† Ibid., p. 116.

‡ Ibid., p. 114.

grass
(locu
this l
stitute
the v
as the
precis
strikin
mon a
text, t
In the
of com
rous a
came o
phic.
shall s
here a
All p
necessit
press th
language
tural obj
lities or
municate
pressions
my shield
the fitness
the origin
its very
phors.
ployed is
or function
place of
writing se
of writing
efforts to r
scribed; a
and that c

grasshoppers for multitude, for in the original the word for both (locusts and grasshoppers) is the same,* is equally unhappy. By this loose method of interpretation, we ought, in Rev. xiii. 1, to substitute *camels* for *the sand of the sea*, upon which John stood; for in the very verse quoted from Judges, we are told that their *camels* were as *the sand of the sea* for multitude. These two inferences rest on precisely the same foundation, and, when taken together, show in a striking manner the absurdity of the practice, which is but too common among commentators, quoting words independent of their context, to give the semblance of Scripture authority to their own dicta. In the prophecy under consideration, *locusts* are not used as a term of comparison: it is not said, that a body of men—an army, *numerous as locusts*, came out of the smoke of the pit, but that *locusts came out of the smoke—beings signified by this symbol or hieroglyphic*. Who or what these are that are designated by this term, we shall soon discover. It may be useful, however, previously to offer here a few remarks on the nature of hieroglyphical language.

All primitive languages are highly figurative, and they are so from necessity. Men must possess ideas before they seek words to express them, and when new ones are produced, making use of the language they possess, they are obliged to have recourse to such natural objects around them as are known, or supposed to possess qualities or properties some way resembling the idea they wish to communicate. Hence the language of *metaphor*, which uses such expressions as these: God is my *rock*—my *fortress*—my *high tower*—my *shield*—and *the horn* of my salvation. In such modes of speech, the fitness of the figure is manifest, and occasions no ambiguity; but the original paucity of language introduced another form, which, from its very nature, seems to have been prior even to the use of metaphors. I mean the *symbolical* language; in which the figure employed is not used as an adjunct, expressive of some property, quality, or function of the object or subject named along with it, but put in place of the object or subject itself. The origin of this mode of writing seems obvious. Oral language being antecedent to any kind of writing, the first attempts at the latter could be nothing but rude efforts to represent to the eye a draught or outline of the object described; as the picture of a lion when that animal was to be expressed, and that of a man when a man was to be described: but as moral

* Newton's Dissertations, vol. III., p. 98.

qualities as well as physical objects were required to be also conveyed by writing, and as in oral language these could only be expressed by figures drawn from sensible objects, the same method was necessarily employed in graphic attempts, and hence a lion (or any other figure) was employed, not only to represent the animal itself, but as a *substitute* for some other object, to which one or more of the qualities proper to the lion were ascribed. Thus, a lion, by common consent, signified a man strong and powerful—a *king*, and hence such an expression as this—"the lion of the tribe of Judah," i. e., the king who had his descent from that tribe; for even after languages became more copious, and would furnish many terms proper for expressing abstract ideas, the old method continued, and was blended with oral language, and with literal writings, which was much later than the symbolic.

Strange as this method of writing appears to the moderns, it was brought to such perfection as to possess powers of expression far beyond what can now be easily conceived. This is plain from the number of synonymous symbols that are known to have been employed in it; nor is it difficult in some instances to see in what manner they were derived. Every department of nature furnished objects that were fitted for the purpose: hence, to express a king, they were not confined to the brute creation—whatever was the *chief* of its kind became, or by common consent might have become, a legitimate symbol of a monarch; as the eagle, which was so employed, because conceived to possess the first rank among the feathered tribes. Again, as a king's power to subdue his enemies depends on the strength of his kingdom, and as animals with horns are, *ceteris paribus*, stronger than those who have none, horns are put for *kingdoms*; and kings having the direction of the national force, the same symbol is, by metonymy, put for kings. In like manner, the firmament, to use the ancient term, being elevated above the earth, and esteemed more splendid and glorious than terrestrial objects, was employed to symbolize the most elevated ranks among men; and, as among the planets, the sun possesses incomparably the highest lustre, it became the symbol of *supreme power*, while the stars were made symbols of those possessing *authority subordinate to the supreme*.

Among the Egyptians this kind of writing was carried to the highest degree of perfection: those traditions and mysteries which were thought of sufficient importance to be handed down to their successors, were engraven on the pyramids, the walls of their temples, and

other
wor
prie
writi
posse
able
whic
Bu
howe
langu
and d
attach
have
ancien
one ab
in Hel
concei
vey th
in our
But th
greater
metaph
to their
used th
the anc
it is the
industry
and Joh
meaning
these si
more da
in ascer
paring t

* Much
fashioned,
sisting, an
antiquaria
by learned
"The I
from Egypt
commentin

other works of art, and hence the name *hieroglyphic*, from two Greek words, *Hieros*, *holy*, and *Glyphein*, *to engrave*. In the true spirit of priest-craft, this was continued long after the invention of literal writing, to impress the vulgar with an idea that their teachers were possessed of the most *mysterious* knowledge—knowledge not attainable by other men; whereas the whole mystery lay in this veil with which their language was covered.

But not to detain the reader longer with this digression, which, however, was necessary, I shall only farther remark, that, in the language of which I have been speaking, each symbol has a precise and determinate meaning, and it is not left to fancy or to sagacity to attach to it any signification which the reader may imagine would have been more appropriate than that which was assigned to it by the ancients; for our business is not now *to make a language*, but *to read one already made*; and we might as well refuse to assign to any word in Hebrew, Greek, or Latin, its known and admitted sense, from a conceit that a more expressive word might have been formed to convey that idea, as quarrel with the meaning of a hieroglyphic, because in our judgment a more appropriate one might have been formed. But this is, in fact, the line of conduct that has been followed by the greater part of expositors. They have confounded symbols with metaphors; and, because the figures employed in the latter, according to their various combinations, admit of various significations, have used the freedom to assign to the former meanings not recognised by the ancients, and therefore inadmissible. When symbols are employed, it is the duty of an expositor, instead of resorting to fancy, to employ industry, not *to make*, but *to find out the admitted sense*. In Daniel and John many of the symbols they employ are explained; the meaning of others may be found in other prophecies; and where these fail, recourse must be had to profane authors. Nor is there more danger in seeking the meaning of a symbol in such works, than in ascertaining the sense of any word in the New Testament by comparing the best Greek writers with each other.* By following this

* Much of the Egyptian hieroglyphic, on which the prophetic style was fashioned, may be learned from many ancient records and monuments still subsisting, and from innumerable hints and passages scattered through the Greek antiquarians and historians, which have been carefully collected and compared by learned men.

"The Pagan superstitions of every form and species, which were either derived from Egypt or conducted on hieroglyphic notions, have been of singular use in commenting on the Jewish prophets. Their omens, augury, and judicial astro-

method, it can hardly be doubted that the true and genuine signification of every one of the symbols they employ may be satisfactorily ascertained. It may not be in the power of any single individual to accomplish this desirable object. When he cannot, by his industry, discover the meaning of any particular hieroglyphic, instead of showing himself ingenious, let him be ingenuous and confess his want of success, and we may hope that others, from sources which he may not have an opportunity of consulting, will soon supply the deficiency.

Having thus endeavoured to show the necessity of carefully distinguishing between metaphors and symbols, which will be of use in our future progress, I shall next proceed to the particular signification of those made use of in this Trumpet.

SECTION II.—Of the Fallen Star, and the Opening of the Pit of the Abyss.

"And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star fallen (not *fall*, as in the common version) from heaven unto the earth; and to him was given the key of the pit of the abyss," Rev. ix. 1.

A Star, as we have frequently had occasion to see, is a symbol of a civil or ecclesiastical ruler. It never has any other signification throughout this book or that of Daniel, when used as a symbol. We are not left in doubt here respecting this star, for this is not its first

logy, seem to have proceeded on symbolic principles; the mystery being only this, that such objects as in hieroglyphic pictures were made the symbols of certain ideas, were considered as omens of the things themselves. . . .

"But of all the Pagan superstitions, that which is known by the name of *Oneirocritics*, or the art of interpreting dreams, is most directly to our purpose. There is a curious treatise on this subject, which bears the name of Achmet, an Arabian writer; and another by Artemidorus, an Egyptian, who lived about the end of the first century. In the former of these collections (for both works are compiled out of preceding and very ancient writers), the manner of interpreting dreams, according to the use of the Oriental nations, is delivered; as the rules, which the Grecian diviners followed, are deduced in the other. For light and frivolous as this art was, it is not supposed that it was taken up at hazard, or could be conducted without rules. . . . But the rules by which the Greek and Oriental diviners justified their interpretations, appear to have been formed on symbolic principles. . . . So that the prophetic style, which is all over painted with hieroglyphic imagery, receives an evident illustration from these two works. . . .

"Nor is any sanction, in the meantime, given . . . to the Pagan practice of divining by dreams; for, though the same symbols be interpreted in the same manner, yet the *prophecy* doth not depend on the *interpretation* of the dream. . . . It follows that the rules which the ancient diviners observed in explaining symbolic dreams, may be safely and justly applied to the interpretation of symbolic prophecies."—*Bp. Hurd, Sermon IX.*

intro
fall,
by h
fount
the cl
the co
follow
"bitter
15; an
in com
collect
word, I
abyas."
title giv
conferre
bottomle
That
in this
sideratio
the estab
The Mos
given into
the most
the Trun
Seals. W
of this ki
been expl
matters th
was to des
to magnify
siah;—we
Daniel's se
of the seal
not enough

* This star
the Son of Man
that rock upon
wherever or by
all who believe
5, 8, 35, ult.;
xvi., &c.

introduction to our notice: it is a star fallen from heaven—not yet to *fall*, not now *falling* but already *fallen*: even the same star who, by his fall, under the “third trumpet, embittered the rivers and fountains of water.” He fell from his proper sphere, which was in the church. The body in which he now had pre-eminence, was not the congregation of the faithful, though he gave that appellation to his followers, but “the synagogue of Satan,” Rev. ii. 9; a body full of “bitter envyings and strife, earthly, sensual, devilish,” James iii. 14, 15; and, instead of possessing “the keys of the kingdom of heaven,” in common with Christian bishops and their congregations, acting collectively, and binding and loosing agreeably to the rule of God’s word, Matt. xvi. 19, to him was now given the “key of the pit of the abyss.” Instead of being any longer “an angel of the church,” a title given to Christian bishops, Rev. i. 20, he has now a new title conferred on him, “the angel (messenger) of the abyss,” or “of the bottomless pit,” as in our common version, ver. 11.

That the origin of the Antichristian kingdom is the event declared in this trumpet, will farther appear evident from the following considerations: Next to the setting up of the kingdom of the Messiah, the establishment of that king who was to “wear out the saints of *The Most High*, to change times and laws,” and to have “the saints given into his hand” for so long a period as 1260 prophetic years, is the most important particular detailed in the *Sealed Book*, of which *the Trumpets* are expositors—for they are brought in to explain *the Seals*. Where, then, among all the trumpets, do we find the erection of this kingdom alluded to, if not under the fifth?—If this has not been explained, then all the seals have not been removed; for the matters that related to the king “understanding *dark sentences*, who was to destroy wonderfully, cause craft to prosper in his hand,” and to magnify himself against “the Prince of Princes,” i. e., *the Messiah*;—were principal parts of the contents of more than one of Daniel’s seals. But to insinuate that any one, or a part of any one of the seals, has not been opened, would be highly impious. It is not enough to say, that very explicit descriptions of this power are

* This star had virtually renounced the truth which Peter avowed concerning the Son of Man—“Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God;” that truth, that rock upon which it was said the church of God should be built, and which, wherever or by whomsoever it was preached, opened the kingdom of heaven to all who believed it; whether it was by Peter, Acts ii. and x.; by Philip, vii. 5, 8, 35, ult.; by men of Cyprus and Cyrene, xi. 90, 21; or by Paul, xiii. xvi., &c.

given in the subsequent part of this book of the Revelation: such an explanation must be found somewhere between the beginning of the sixth chapter and the end of the eleventh: for to these two and the four intermediate chapters is the opening of the seals confined; the subsequent parts of the book being composed of the things which John was commanded to "prophecy against many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings."

It is no objection to this, that *the Revelation* is thus made to repeat the same things, for it cannot be otherwise, when it is considered that the very things which John was to prophecy were communicated to him by making him *eat* (i. e., study, weigh, ponder) the very book from which the seals had been removed, Rev. x. 9; in the comprehending of which he was also assisted by new visions, and by instructions, communicated by special *messengers* sent from heaven for that purpose. Nor can it be alleged that the rise of Antichrist's kingdom makes part of the contents of the third trumpet: the general apostacy which, according to Paul, 2 Thess. ii. 3, was to be the precursor of *the Man of Sin*, is indeed, as we have seen, described under that trumpet; but, while this was carrying on to maturity, *he that hindered the revelation of the Son of Perdition was still in the way*; nor was he removed till the fourth trumpet was sounded, and the light of the third part of the heaven politic was extinguished. Therefore none of the preceding trumpets could embrace this event. But the hinderance being taken out of the way, then *the star* which fell from heaven under the third trumpet, the head and leader of the Antichristian hierarchy, asserted his claim to a kingdom, which "is of this world," and which stands in direct opposition to the kingdom of *Christ*, which "is not from hence."

He now became a *little horn*—a circumstance which has not been generally noticed by commentators; few of whom consider him as a king, till he has obtained some part of his territorial possessions, afterwards called *the patrimony of Peter*. But had they attended to the description given in Daniel of this *little horn*, they would have seen that he has his rise before any of the three horns are cast down before him—that he is a horn prior to the period at which they are plucked up by the roots, and their possessions given to him;* that is,

* Mr. Faber has noticed the circumstance that *the little horn* existed before the eradication of *the three horns*. (*Dissertations*, 3d edit. vol. I. p. 163.) But having followed the common practice of assuming facts as the fulfilment of prophecy, and, from such assumptions, settled his dates, he has contrived to render his general system as exceptionable as any of those from whom he differs.

he l
rule
of S
sess
pote
give
terri
self
Th
spirit
disgu
shutti
the ke
of the
"A
of the
were c
In l
emblem
of the
one: a
tion in
the falle
he prop
the erro
tor,§ bu
1 Tim.
faith, gi
demons
sciences

* When
bards, he
dum fore a
† Los H
‡ "The
occasioned
§ Indeed
to Mahome
rically, qui
therefore, w
religion.—T
to obtain cr

he had already "placed himself in the temple of God, as a god," or ruler, as has been shown in treating of Paul's prophecy of "the Man of Sin:" and it was in consequence of the power he already possessed, as a ruler, claiming a higher degree of veneration than earthly potentates, that he succeeded in prevailing on some of the kings* to give their strength to him, and dispossess three of the others of their territories, and at length succeeded in "exalting and magnifying himself above them all."

The power which he claimed when he first became a *horn*, was a spiritual power; so at least he asserted; for, *the secret of iniquity* lay in disguising its true object. He still claimed the power of opening and shutting, and he becomes possessed of the symbol—"a key," not the key or keys of the kingdom of heaven, but "the key of the pit of the abyss," i. e., hell.

"And he opened the pit of the abyss, and there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke from the pit."

In hieroglyphic language, smoke as opposed to light (which is the emblem of knowledge), means ignorance and error.† This meaning of the symbol is so obvious that it can scarcely fail to strike every one: accordingly expositors are unanimous in giving it that significance in the passage before us; and those who make *Mahomet* to be the fallen star, of course apply this darkness to the false religion which he propagated. But as *the fallen star* does not mean Mahomet,‡ so the errors here predicted do not relate to the doctrines of that impostor,§ but to those of the men of whom "the Spirit spoke expressly, 1 Tim. iv. 1, 3, that in the latter times they should depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and the doctrines concerning demons (*daimonion*); speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their consciences seared with a hot iron; forbidding to marry, and commanding

* When Pope Stephen III. wrote to Pepin, requesting aid against the Lombards, he told him, that if he did not speedily come *pro datu sibi potentia, alienum fore a regno Dei et vita eterna*, he should be excommunicated.

† *Les Hieroglyph. de Valerian*, p. 625.

‡ "The darkness which overspread the East in the time of Mahomet, was not occasioned by him; he made use of it for his purposes." — *Wandhouse*.

§ Indeed, in the strict and proper sense of the word, error cannot be imputed to Mahomet. The word signifies *wandering from a right path*, and, metaphorically, *quitting truth to follow lies*: but Mahomet was a pagan, and cannot therefore, with truth, be asserted to have quitted truth when he broached his new religion.—Those who speak of him as if he had been a Christian, if they wish to obtain credit, should produce their authority for such an apocryphal assertion.

to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving by them who believe and know the truth."—That this is the darkness let out of the "pit of the abyss," is declared in positive terms at the end of this chapter, after the evils inflicted by the Euphratean horsemen are described; for it is added, that "the men who were not killed by these plagues, yet repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship *demons* (*Daimonia*), and idols, nor of their sorceries," &c. On these doctrines of darkness, the "dark sentences," in which the king of "impudent countenance," Dan. viii. 23, was to be well skilled, I shall not now insist, as they will fall to be spoken of hereafter.

Smoke, in hieroglyphical language sometimes signifies even the desire to do good, when it receives a wrong direction under the influence of error,* or what, in the language of Paul, is called "a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge;" that mistaken zeal which leads a man to persecute his fellow creatures on account of their religious opinions, imagining "that he doth God service."

Smoke is likewise considered as the presage and accompaniment of fire;† and fire, as we have seen in this book, signifies war.—This "smoke as of a great furnace," was the preface of those wars of which "the man of sin" was to be the instigator, for the maintenance of his power; and accordingly we are told further on, that he had "power to bring down fire from the heaven," in the sight of men—that is, to excite tempests in the heaven politic—a power which he never could have acquired, had not "darkness first covered the earth, and gross darkness the people." Isa. lx. 2. This darkness was indeed so gross, that it might be felt, and was felt: *the sun, i. e., the sovereign power*, was clouded over, not *smitten*, as the imperial power was under the former trumpet, but "darkened by the smoke from the pit," men being taught to respect and venerate ecclesiastics more than the higher powers, which God had commanded *all* to obey, not excepting the highest church dignitaries upon earth. Nor was this all: the sovereignty of the *Sun of Righteousness* was invaded, and men were taught, in opposition to his testimony, that it was *not* a vain worship to receive for doctrines the commandments of men.‡

* Valerian. p. 625.

† Horapo, in his Hieroglyph. lib. ii. cap. 16.

‡ Language cannot describe the miserable ignorance which for ages prevailed among the "blind leaders of the blind:" I have therefore avoided, entirely, a detail which, however useful it might be, could not be brought into a reasonable compass. Let the following serve as a specimen—Pope Zachary, in one of his

Th
good
it ind
angry
smoke
which
for as
medium
mainte
"smok
frame o
their po
have be
secured
ness. S
every go
10) gov
offences,
Certain
was acco
siastics o
executing
of the lat
in the stat
quence, su
be expect
followed.
made them
the power
yield them
ranks of me
whenever th
their obedie
their away.

letters to Boni
forbidden to su
me, how long l
have given no
unless dried in
proper that he s
* Artemidom

The *air* was also darkened. The *oneirocritics* say that *air* denotes good or evil, according to the state in which it is seen. "Clear and pure, it indicates good to all, but when troubled and cloudy, *hinderance and angry contention*." Now here the *air* is clouded and darkened by the smoke of the pit—a most appropriate description of the direful effects which flowed from the general ignorance and bigotry that prevailed; for as the *air*, which immediately surrounds the earth, interposed as a medium between it and the sun, and indispensably requisite for the maintenance of life, is contaminated and rendered unhealthy by dense "smoke, as of a great furnace," diffused and suspended in it,—so the frame of government, the political medium between sovereigns and their people, by which the blessings of good and equal laws ought to have been administered to all ranks, and the affections of the people secured to their rulers, was marred and spoiled by this moral darkness. Subjects were deprived of the benefits and protection which every government owes them, and for which alone (Rom. xiii. 1—10) governments are instituted. Opinions were converted into offences, and the most heinous vices were made virtues!

Certain it is that the darkening of the *sun and air*, here mentioned, was accompanied with all the evils to which I have alluded. Ecclesiastics obtained the power of sitting as judges, and the infamy of executing their sentences was left to the civil magistrate! The power of the latter was thus degraded: instead of being revered as the first in the state, it fell into the second place, and, as a necessary consequence, sunk in the estimation of the people. The evils that might be expected from such an inversion of the natural order of things followed. Ecclesiastics, taking advantage of the general ignorance, made themselves masters both of kings and their subjects; employing the power of the former to persecute and oppress all who failed to yield them that reverence and worship which they required from all ranks of men, and exciting the latter to rebel against the civil powers, whenever they dared to oppose their usurpations, or refused to become their obedient and passive instruments in subjecting the people to their sway.

letters to Boniface, the Apostle of the Germans, tells him that "Christians are forbidden to eat jays, rooks, storks, hares," &c. In another, he says, "You ask me, how long lard ought to be kept before it be eaten? In this matter the fathers have given no direction; however, my opinion is, that it ought not to be eaten unless dried in the smoke, or dressed with fire; but if any will eat it raw, it is proper that he should wait till after the Easter holidays."

* Artemidorus, lib. ii

It appears, then, that Daniel's "little horn, the king of impudent countenance, the prince that was yet to come;"—Paul's "man of sin, the son of perdition," whose iniquitous spirit was at work even in the days of the Apostles;—and John's "fallen star, the angel of the abyss, the destroyer, the Antichrist;"—all predicted the same arrogant, usurping, unprincipled power. In the grand features by which it is pointed out they all agree: Daniel says, "He shall do according to his own will, and magnify and exalt himself above every god," *every potentate*;—Paul says, "He opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called god, (*all that is known by the name of civil authority*), or that is revered;"—John says that he "darkens the sun," that is the sun politic, putting the lawful power of kings in the shade, that his own may be exalted. They likewise agree in the time: Daniel's "little horn comes up among the ten horns of his fourth beast," *i. e.*, rises at the same time;—Paul's "man of sin is revealed when the then ruling power, which hindered him, is taken away," *i. e.*, when the imperial head is removed, by the establishment of the ten kingdoms which succeeded it;—and John's "king of the locusts" makes his appearance in that character, "when the imperial sun is smitten" by the blast of the fourth trumpet; for then the fifth trumpet sounds; and it is permitted to him "to open the pit of the abyss;" and, further on, in "the Revelation," we are likewise informed, that this *beast*, or kingdom, the eighth head of the Roman empire, was "to receive its power in one hour," *i. e.*, at the same time "with the ten kingdoms."

I have been the more particular in pointing out the rebellious spirit by which this usurper was to display his contempt for the higher powers, because this part of his character has been too little regarded by expositors; but it may be proper here to remark, that Daniel, Paul, and John, agree also in the character they ascribe to him as the enemy of Jehovah. Daniel says, "He shall speak great words against the Most High—wear out the saints of the Most High," and worship the god *Mahuzzim*, *i. e.*, protectors, dead men, *demons*;—Paul says, "he shall sit in the temple of God, exhibiting himself as God," and teach "doctrines concerning demons;"—and John says, "he denieth that Jesus is the Christ," *i. e.*, *the Anointed*, that is, *the King*; for such is the import of the word *Messiah* in the Old Testament, and *Christ* in the New, when accompanied with the article *the*.—With whatever apparent piety men may, in words, confess that *Jesus is the Christ*, if they do not, in every thing, submit to His

author
that re
His, 'A
Antich
"spirit
air," v
earth."

See

"An
unto th
power,"

The j
was pre
and not
of heav
Here w
dominion
his auth
king of t
came loc

I have
consider
arguments
their head
dress of t
Do they n
world wh
marks of
a very diff
dent, in th
whatever t
are intende

Here I r
employs n
numerous

* Brightm
Ac. &c.

authority—if they yield obedience in matters of faith, or in any thing that regards their practice as Christians, to any other authority than His, “they are in works denying him;” and this is that “spirit of Antichrist,” which was at work even in the Apostles’ days—that “spirit of error” which in its operation “darkened the sun and the air,” when the “fallen angel” set loose his “locusts against the earth.”—But of these in the next section.

SECTION III.—Of the Locusts, and the power given to them.

“And there came out of the smoke locusts against the earth, and unto them was given power as the scorpions of the earth have power,” Rev. ix. 3.

The *fallen star*, as we have seen, represents that king of whom it was predicted, that he should deal in “dark sentences” and *mysteries*, and not only blind men, in a moral sense, but war against “the host of heaven” (the kings of the earth), and put their power in the shade. Here we are informed by what instruments he established his dominion. A king without attendants, officers, and agents, to enforce his authority, would be a nullity. This was not the case with “the king of the abyss:” he had an army of locusts—“out of the smoke came locusts against the earth.”

I have already had occasion to notice that many commentators* consider the Arabians as intended by the locusts. Among other arguments in support of this opinion, they tell us that “their having on their heads as it were crowns like gold,” is an allusion to the head-dress of the Arabians, who have constantly worn turbans or mitres. Do they mean to insinuate that the Saracens are the only men in the world who wear mitres? This, which is one of the distinguishing marks of the locusts, may perhaps be found more characteristic of a very different description of men. Having, as I think, made it evident, in the two former Sections, that the locusts have no relation whatever to the Mahometans, I shall now endeavour to ascertain who are intended by this hieroglyphic.

Here I must once more remark, that the prophet in this place employs not a metaphor but a symbol: it was not merely armies numerous as locusts that “came out of the smoke.” We must

* Brighman, Mede, Waple, Waiston, Lowman, Newman, K., Faber, &c. &c.

ascertain, then, the signification of this hieroglyphic; and, as its meaning in that quality cannot be found in the sacred writings, we must have recourse to others.

Horapollon* says, that to represent a man attached to sacred things, the Egyptians painted a locust (or grasshopper); and Pierus† informs us, that by locusts the Egyptian priests devoted men received into the fellowship of sacred things, and practised in the discipline of holy mysteries. In other words, the locust is the proper and legitimate symbol for a priest or minister of religion. They held that the mystical doctrine resembled the locust; and more especially the writings of this doctrine, which not comprehending any syllables, nor being constructed like oral language or common writing, but composed wholly of symbols, discoursed with an absolute significance; that is, their discourses and writings, though as unintelligible to the profane as the noise of the locust, had a meaning known to the initiated! It might have been thought, as this knowledge was too sublime for common men, that these priests, contented with the exclusive enjoyment of such satisfying food, would, in private those who were doomed not to be partakers, have feasted on it secretly and in silence; but the old Greek proverb, "Scratch not the belly of the locust," employed when they were fearful of setting a loquacious man's tongue in motion, seems to ascribe to these men a different character. "It is allowed to locusts," says Demetrius, the philosopher, "to cry with impunity, and such is their noise that we dare not even open our mouths."‡

It appears, then, that the men symbolized by locusts are those of the *sacred orders*, men attached by *profession and trade* to what they call *sacred things*. They are the same of whom the churches were forewarned from the beginning: "I know this," says Paul, Acts xx. 29, 30, "that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also, of your own selves (he is addressing

* Horapollinis Hieroglyph., lib. ii., cap. 55.

† Ibid lib. xxvi., cap. 42.

‡ According to Artemidorus (lib. iii.) locusts also signify musicians, and this holds true of the men here intended. Gervais (Histoire de Suger, tom. i., p. 23) informs us, that in the fifth century, in different places, acclamations of praise were performed by singers, who succeeded each other both night and day, that the service might suffer no interruption. This turbulent shouting and the noise of instruments were substituted for the simple sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving—a proof of the dominion of Babylon, in which "the voice of harpers and musicians, and of organists and trumpeters, shall soon be heard no more at all," Rev. xviii. 22.

* Sulpicius
Dialog. II. ca.

bishops) shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them." "In the last days, perilous times shall come; for men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, revilers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, perfidious, false accusers, intemperate, fierce, enemies to the good, traitors, head-strong, high-minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof," 2 Tim. iii. 1—5. "There were false prophets among the people," says Peter, 2 Ep. ii., "as there will be likewise false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable sects, (*hairesis* *apoleins*, *sects of perdition*), even denying the Master that bought them, bringing upon themselves swift destruction: and the Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of trials, and to reserve these unjust men to the day of judgment to be punished: but chiefly them that walk after the flesh, in the lust of uncleanness, and despise government—bold, self-willed, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities." No, the hierarchy has never scrupled to maintain that the higher powers, which God himself hath ordained, are inferior in dignity, and entitled to less reverence than the ecclesiastical. Of this innumerable instances might be given: but I must speak particularly of the arrogance and presumption of the locusts as a body, when I come to treat of "the beast to which the dragon gave his power," chap. xiii. I shall here only remark, that in the fifth century, the period in which the "pit of the abyss" was opened, the office of a presbyter was held to be of such a high and dignified nature, that the emperor was considered as inferior in dignity to one of that order. Martin, bishop of Tours (and a great miracle worker), was absolutely so audacious as to maintain this position at a public entertainment.* Let it be recollected, too, that, long before this period, bishops and presbyters had become two distinct orders:—if such was the veneration due to the latter, what worship would Martin have demanded for his own order, had *his modesty* allowed him to speak out?

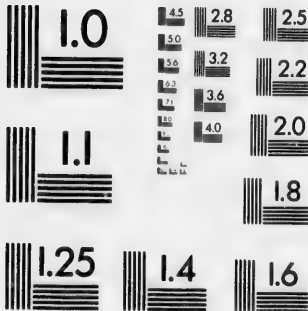
Having quoted the Scripture account of the character which belongs to the locusts, I shall not detain the reader with a particular description of the vices that pervaded the body, at the time when they came out of the smoke against the earth: suffice it to say that, all the writers of the fifth century, whose probity and virtue entitle them to credit,

* Sulpitius Severus, *De Vita Martini*, cap. xx., p. 339, compared with *Dialog. II. cap. vi. p. 457.*



MICROCOPY RESOLUTION TEST CHART

(ANSI and ISO TEST CHART No. 2)



APPLIED IMAGE Inc

1653 East Main Street
Rochester, New York 14609 USA
(716) 482 - 0300 - Phone
(716) 288 - 5989 - Fax

are unanimous in their accounts of the luxury, arrogance, avarice, and voluptuousness of the sacerdotal orders:—vices which would never have been endured, had not the greatest part of mankind been sunk in superstition and ignorance, and all in general formed their ideas of the rights and liberties of Christian ministers from the mode exhibited by the sacerdotal orders among the Hebrews, Greeks, and Romans, during the law of Moses* and the darkness of Paganism. The barbarous nations also, those fierce and warlike Germans, who, after the defeat of the Romans, divided among them the Western Empire, bore, with the utmost patience and moderation, both the dominion and vices of the bishops and priests, because, upon their conversion to Christianity, they became naturally subject to their jurisdiction; and still more, because they looked upon the ministers of Christ as invested with the same rights and privileges, which distinguished the priests of their fictitious deities. . . . Multitudes of people of all kinds were everywhere admitted, without examination and without choice, into the body of the clergy. . . . Many of these ecclesiastics were confined to no fixed places or assemblies, had no employment of any kind, but sauntered about wherever they pleased, gaining their maintenance by imposing upon the ignorant multitude, and sometimes by mean and dishonest practices.† The monks, another genus of the same order, of whom I have yet much to say, had hitherto lived only for themselves, in solitary retreats, without assuming any rank among ecclesiastics. They were now gradually distinguished from the populace, became so wealthy, though originally professed beggars, and obtained such honourable privileges, that they were now enabled to claim an eminent station among the supports and pillars of the Antichristian community.‡ They were now become so celebrated for piety and sanctity that vacancies among the higher orders of the hierarchy were often filled out of their body; and the passion, which had long prevailed, of building and endowing edifices, in which the monks and the holy virgins (another part of the family of the locusts) might serve God, in the most commodious manner, was now carried to the most extravagant lengths.§

* Their pretensions to the priesthood exhibited under the law of Moses, were open denials "of the priesthood and law being changed;"—of "the priesthood of Him who was made not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life"—and of "the word of the oath, which consecrated *the Son* for evermore."

† Mosheim, vol. II., p. 30, edit., 1790.

‡ Epiphanius, *Exposit Fidei* tom. i. opp., p. 1094.

§ Norisius, *Hist. Pelag.* lib. c. iii., p. 272, tom. i. opp.

nei
the
The
ever
Wo
false
prom
of co
of th
in th
else
to an
migh
scorp
than
the se
power
have
Rev.
ten ki
The
langua
and h
wished
painted
annihil
him as
speedil
cular,
they di
and per
days of
dominio
fourth e

* Arta
† "A la
scorpion c
that neith
in water.
† Horap

avarice, and
would never
been sunk in
their ideas of
e. exhibiteu
and Romans,
nism. The
who, after
rn Empire,
ominion and
nversion to
fiction; and
as invested
e priests of
kinds were
choice, into
s were con-
of any kind,
aintenance
mean and
ne order, of
themselves,
eclesiastics.
became so
ch honour-
ment station
mmunity.‡
nctity that
often filled
eailed, of
d the holy
erve God,
the most

of Moses,
-of "the
amandment,
oath, which

Oneirocritics informs us, that to such as need aid, locusts signify neither friends nor support, but only words and idle talk respecting their affairs; and to such as are in fear, they indicate impotent threats.* The former part of this description is so apposite, that it must strike every person. What do the men here alluded to give to their votaries? Words, idle talk—"profane babblings, and oppositions of science, falsely so called," 1 Tim. vi. 20—"Great swelling words of vanity, promising liberty while they themselves are the servants (or slaves) of corruption," 2 Pet. ii. 18, 19. Nor is the latter part less descriptive of these men, though at first view it may appear otherwise; for locusts, in the strictest sense, mean only *talkers about mysteries*, and if nothing else were coupled with that symbol, would denote their impotence as to any power, proper to them, by which they could punish those who might despise their threats. But "unto them was given power as the scorpions of the earth have power;"—a thing not more proper to them than the sting of the scorpion to the natural locust. This was what the sealed book foretold respecting the king of these locusts—"his power shall be mighty, but not by his *proper power*"—that is, he shall have "the power of another given to him;" and we learn elsewhere, Rev. xvii. 17, that the power given to the locusts was that of "the ten kings"—and hence their ability to do mischief.

The power conferred on them, to speak in the idiom of our own language, was like that proper to the land-scorpion—a power to injure and hurt those whom they chose to attack. When the Egyptians wished to represent an equal combat between two adversaries, they painted a scorpion† and a crocodile; for these animals threaten mutual annihilation; but if they meant to point out a victor, they represented him as one of these animals—as a crocodile, if he obtained the victory speedily, but as a scorpion, if he obtained it slowly.‡ In this particular, the symbol of the power given to the locusts is very striking: they did not acquire their influence in a short time, but by slow degrees and persevering industry. They were secretly at work so early as the days of the Apostles, but they did not attain, in its fullest extent, the dominion for which they struggled, till the imperial head of Daniel's fourth empire was destroyed. But then the power of Antichrist

* Artemidorus, lib. ii.

† "A land-scorpion," according to Pierus; for the water-scorpion, or a land-scorpion covered with water, was the symbol of impotent malice. Cyprian says, that neither scorpions nor serpents possess the power to injure, when immersed in water.

‡ Horapollinis, Hieroglyph, lib. ii. cap. 35.

became tremendous, and the mightiest monarchs were made to feel the weight of its dreadful tyranny.

The hieroglyphic employed to designate the malignity of the power conferred on the locusts intimates also the means by which it was acquired, and the spirit by which it has been invariably accompanied: "the land-scorpion is a particular symbol of treachery and fallacy."* Sophocles has this proverb, "The scorpion is constantly on the watch under a stone;" and Nicander, in his *Theriaci*, observes, that the scorpion places itself in ambush beneath a stone. Apuleius denotes by the scorpion, a man of a sour and morose disposition: "Do you know a certain cruel thything man of this city, whom, on account of the moroseness of his manners the common people call a scorpion?" And the ancient astrologers maintain, among the aphorisms, that those born under the sign of the scorpion are lustful, voluptuous, quarrelsome, irascible, and subtle in surprising their adversaries. Naturalists also tell us of the scorpion, that of all the class of noxious insects, it is the most terrible—its shape is hideous, its size among the insects is enormous, and its sting often fatal. No animal in the creation is endued with such an irascible nature:—when taken and put into a place of security, it exerts all its rage against the sides of the glass vessel that contains it; it attempts to sting a stick which is brought near it, and attacks a mouse or a frog without any provocation. The vindictive spirit of this animal is equally dangerous to its own species, on being incommoded in the least degree. Mapertuis put about one hundred of them into the same glass, and they scarce came into contact, when they began to exert all their rage in mutual destruction:—universal carnage followed, without distinction of age or sex, and in a few days there remained only fourteen, which had destroyed and ned all the rest.

Such is the character which this symbol marks out as proper to the men signified by the locusts, and such, in fact, has their character been. They obtained their power by crafty artifices—unrighteous frauds, and false miracles,—“speaking lies in hypocrisy,” 1 Tim. iv. 2. Even while Antichrist was in his non-age, it was held as a maxim among “the sacred orders” that “it was an act of virtue to deceive and lie, when by that means the interest of the church might be promoted;” and long before the end of the fifth century this diabolical axiom was almost universally adopted by the whole gyllous

* Pierus, lib. xvi. cap. xv.

fam
tain
adv
the
prie
wou
Greg
than
accu
ligiou
ough
maxi
the al
was in
sion to
siastic
power
with t
during
confir
mitted
Havi
essing
Section
respecti

S
“It w
the earth
have not
that they
months,
he strik
That sy
is here de
the natura
considerin

family. That a propo-ition so iniquitous should ever have been maintained, would be incredible, did it rest on the testimony of their adversaries, but it is avowed, without disguise, in the writings of the most orthodox Divines; and what is more singular, its propriety was questioned by none but heretics. Moshem says—"We would willingly except from this charge Ambrose and Hilary, Augustin, Gregory Nazianzen, and Jerome; but truth, which is more respectable than these venerable fathers, obliges us to involve them in the general accusation." It was now also held by the whole phalanx, that "religious errors, when maintained and adhered to after proper admonition, ought to be punished with civil penalties and corporal tortures." This maxim, which was acted upon to its utmost latitude, after the pit of the abyss was opened, and the locusts were let loose against the earth, was introduced with the prosperous times which Constantine's accession to the empire brought to churchmen: and what is singular, ecclesiastics, true to the natural character of the insect by which their power is symbolized, attacked their own family, destroying one another with the most fervent zeal. It was enforced by several examples during the contest that arose with the Priscillianists and Donatists, confirmed and established by the authority of Augustin, and thus transmitted to the following ages.

Having ascertained who are the men symbolized by locusts possessing power similar to that of the land scorpion, I shall, in the next Section, proceed to detail some particulars recorded in this prophecy respecting the exercise of that power.

SECTION IV.—*Of the Command given to the Locusts.*

"It was commanded them that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, nor any green thing, nor any tree; but only those men who have not the seal of God in their foreheads. And to them it was given that they should not kill them, but that they should be tormented five months, and their torment (to be) as the torment of a scorpion when he striketh a man." Rev. ix. 4, 5.

That symbolical and not natural locusts are intended in the prophecy, is here declared in positive terms, for they are not to hurt vegetables, the natural food of locusts, but men; and here we are precluded from considering grass and trees as symbols, because that to which they

* Maclain's Translation, vol. i. p. 382. Edit. 1790.

are put in antithesis, is not a symbol, but men—"those men who have not the seal of God in their foreheads." Here is a direct allusion to the sealing of the 144,000 narrated in the seventh chapter, and which, from its being introduced before the sounding of the trumpets, seems to have been intended as an intimation that the faithful followers of the Lamb, who "are sealed unto the day of redemption," Eph. i. 13, iv. 30, should be preserved by his power from being carried away in the general apostasy. The declaration in the passage before us was a further warning to those "sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise," not to be intimidated by the threats, nor led away by the "high swelling words and promises of felicity," 2 Pet. ii. 19, which the false teachers were to dispense to their followers—to the men not sealed; since to the very persons who should reverence them and submit to their authority, they should prove a snare, a curse, and a torment. "They have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image."

This trumpet is silent respecting the hatred, enmity, and persecution, which the locusts were to manifest towards the followers of "the rider on the white horse," because that had been before fully declared—and because this trumpet is a declaration of *Woe*, not to these, but to the locusts, or rather to their supporters, "the men who have not the seal of God." One thing deserves particular notice: "to the locusts it was given that they should not kill them, but torment them"—not that they should not procure the death of thousands of thousands; but they were to be the instigators to murder, not the executioners; the honour of killing was to remain with the secular power; and has not this been uniformly the practice of the men symbolized by the locusts,—to traduce and vilify all who differed from them in religious sentiments; to convert opinions into crimes; to torment men with the subtleties of their "dark sentences," and idle logomachies, and then to employ the arm of the civil power to fine, imprison, banish, torture, and extirpate, all who dared to question the propriety of any of their dogmas? Was their vindictive malice exercised only against the simple followers of the Lamb? No: locusts warred with locusts—different parties of them attacking each other, and with the most fervent zeal, devoting their respective adversaries to eternal perdition! Had their vengeance been confined to anathemas, the evil would soon have ceased, or at best their malice would have been impotent, for, "the curse causeless shall not come;" Prov. xxvi. 2, but the folly and wickedness of the ruling powers gave an

in
fi
w
—
it
an
lat
pu
thi
lior
the
col
anc
as
the
"the
lian
sati
with
If th
in th
capt
"
cate
were
is, fi
oblig
they
to p
amer
obsti
able
"T
of th
or his
subje
non-c
or her
ters of
while
"A
cated
days u
or if he
to satis
into the
The
in its in
express
reason
by the
prohibi
when su
any law
proof of

importance and consequence to their contemptible wrangles, which filled every kingdom* with misery and woe, and deluged the world with blood.

It was foretold in the sealed book, that the king (that is, the

* Particular proofs of the power of the locusts seemed here unnecessary, but it may not be amiss to note a few examples of the prevalence of their spirit among the reformers, who, "acting probably upon those laws which punished idolatry and sabbath-breaking with death, thought that the civil magistrate should punish all those who disobeyed the sentences and censures of the church, on this principle, that if rebellion against human laws deserved punishment, rebellion against the Divine law deserved it more. This proceeded from an idea that they were, like the pope, whom they opposed, infallible; that they, in their collective capacity, or as a corporate body, represented the head of the church, and held his delegate power, to expound and enforce his laws; for they claimed, as a spiritual body, a kind of supremacy, and a right to direct the movements of the temporal power, for the advancement of knowledge and piety.

"Agreeably to this mode of thinking, an act was passed, in the third parliament of James VI., 1572, c. 53, ordaining all excommunicated persons to satisfy the sentence pronounced against them by the church, reconcile themselves with it, and submit to the discipline thereof, under the pain of rebellion. If they disobeyed the charge of the Lords of Council and Session to that effect, in the manner prescribed in the act, they were put to the horn, and letters of caption might be issued against them.

"By another act passed in the same reign, fifteen years after, excommunicated persons, unless within forty days they were reconciled to the church, were, after the fashion of the synagogue, excluded from the public service, that is, from the means of reformation. If they attempted to attend, they were obliged to remove by the order of the minister. If they made any resistance, they were delivered to the civil power, which was bound to commit them to prison, till they found bail to be reconciled with the church, and make amends for their offence, at the will of the minister. In short, in case of obstinacy, their moveables became escheat to the king, and they were punished in their persons at his Highness's will and pleasure.

"Thus stood the law of cursing, during presbytery in 1587, a relic certainly of the old lady. During prelacy, these penalties were increased; for James, or his ministers, were determined to command the souls and bodies of all his subjects. By positive statute, (1609, c. 3 & 4,) no person excommunicated for non-conformity, that is no papist or presbyterian, could possess any lands or heritage holden of the crown. He could not be received as a vassal by charters of resignation or confirmation, under the great seal, nor be entered heir, while under the ban of the church.

"And farther, by acts 25th, 1661, and 28d, 1663, the person excommunicated might be proceeded against, as in times of popery, if he continued forty days under sentence of excommunication, that is, he might be put in prison, or if he absconded, his property, moveable and immoveable, might be attached, to satisfy the party at whose instance he was cursed."—*Dr. Irvine's Inquiry into the Discipline of the Church of Scotland.*

The spirit under which the above laws were framed appears to have failed in its influence when the "Toleration Act of Queen Anne" was passed, for it expressly declares, "that no civil forfeiture or disability shall be incurred by reason of any excommunication or prosecution, in order to excommunication by the church judicatures of Scotland: and all civil magistrates are expressly prohibited and discharged to force or compel any person or persons to appear when summoned, or to give obedience to any such sentence when pronounced, any law or custom to the contrary, notwithstanding." But even this act is a proof of the power which it restrained.

kingdom) of the locusts should "destroy wonderfully, but not by his own power"—but the meaning of this was sealed, nor would it have been easy to conceive, before the event happened, how the thing could possibly take place, had it not been declared in the Revelation, that the kings themselves would give their power to these men, to enable them in this manner to torment mankind. How could it have been thought possible that potentates should ever become so blind to their own interest as to waste the strength of their states, and do every thing in their power to dry up their own resources, by wars carried on against their own subjects, for mere opinions?—Reason revolts at the idea—humanity shudders at the recital of the miseries that were thus for ages entailed upon mankind; and revelation tells us that this could never have happened but for "the smoke and darkness which came with these locusts from the pit of the abyss."

I shall not now detain the reader with a particular recital of the manner in which they endeavoured to avoid the odium of these murders, by making the ruling powers their instruments of slaughter, as this is more largely insisted on in a part of this prophecy not yet before us; but we must not pass over a striking circumstance, which accompanied the torment of the locusts, and which, in fact, was a principal part of the torture they inflicted:—

"In those days shall men seek death and shall not find it, and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them."

How can this be reconciled with what has been already advanced respecting the murders perpetrated by the procurement of the locusts? Let the reader keep this fact constantly in memory—that the locusts are a body, a kingdom, represented in another part of this prophecy, Rev. xiii. 11, by a "beast rising out of the earth," because it was established by "the kings of the earth;" and yet said, in another place, Rev. xvii. 8, "to ascend out of the pit of the abyss," because thence came that darkness which enabled its principal members, the locusts, to establish their empire. Now, as an animal possessing life has living members, or, in other words, as every individual member of a living creature partakes of the life that animates the whole body, so this politico-religious body has a life proper to itself, in which all its members participate; and its rulers estimate its health, vigour, and prosperity, by its increase—by the number, not the quality, of its adherents.

By the laws of Christ, every rotten member must be "cut off" from his church, even if the operation should be painful to the feelings

* It is persude should th municati miracle t ecclesiast from it, tarily, an

of the other members, like cutting off a right arm, or plucking out a right eye," Matt. xviii., 8. Gal. v. 12,—*Ekkopt*, the word employed in such passages, means to separate from the source of life, as to cut off a branch of a tree from its parent stock. The member so put away ceases to perform any of the functions in the body, that is, he is dead as to the body to which he formerly belonged: and not only so—he is exposed to eternal death, should this discipline fail in producing the effect intended, namely, repentance and reformation, that the person may be restored to the body;—for a separated branch may "again be grafted into its own tree," Rom. xi. 24.

While the laws of Christ continued to be regarded, the fear of being thus separated and ceasing to have life, as members of his body, had a powerful effect in producing circumspection and a diligent zeal in performing the different Christian duties.—Even after the "root of bitterness," Heb. xii. 15, alluded to under the Third Trumpet, had sprung up in the churches, when, in truth, the real disciples ought to have separated themselves from them, and formed a new fellowship, to observe the laws of their Master,—such was the dread of being exposed to this death, that even pious men were induced to submit to the various abuses and new practices that were gradually introduced, bearing with every encroachment, lest they should destroy "the unity of Christ's body." I shall not here repeat what has already been advanced, in treating of the Third Trumpet, but content myself with observing, that this became a powerful engine* in the hands of "the locusts and their king," to compel men to submit to their authority and extortions, till at length the evils with which it was accompanied became such a torment, that many men, had it been in their power, would willingly have shaken off the yoke, regardless of the anathemas of the tyrants by whom they were oppressed:—they sought death—they desired that they might not be considered members of the body, but they could not obtain this favour: they desired to die—attempted to separate themselves

* It is not a little singular that churchmen should have had the address to persuade mankind that they had a power to consign them to reprobation, should they refuse to submit to "their authority." The denouncing of excommunication against separatists is a singular absurdity, and implies a greater miracle than any of all the well attested wonders that have been performed by ecclesiastics. It is cutting off from a body that which is already separated from it,—it is turning a man out of a house when he has himself left it voluntarily, and sworn he will never enter it again.

"but death fled from them:—for the locusts had power given to them:"—the secular arm at their back to compel men to continue members of their community, and to submit to their authority, on pain of the most dreadful punishments that diabolical ingenuity could invent and inflict. Nor were the men symbolized by the locusts ever troubled with any of the common compunctions of humanity. While massacre and carnage were dispensed in every quarter by their infernal policy, with the most shameless effrontery, they affected to lament the depravity and obstinacy which thus brought down the vengeance of the civil power on their devoted victims: for, though "to them it was given that they should not themselves be the butchers, nevertheless they had power to cause that as many as would not worship the Image of the Beast, (that is, the kingdom of the locusts,) should be killed," (Rev. xiii. 15) by the secular arm.

It requires no sagacity to discover the motive that induced the locusts to be thus solicitous that men should be compelled to live as members of their kingdom. They had, before this period, assumed to themselves the right of collecting tithes from their flocks, and were in the receipt of constant and liberal donations from their blind followers. They lived and fared sumptuously, wallowing in every luxury, and vicing with the princes of the earth in the splendour of their establishments. "Without a flock, they could not eat of the milk;" and as they "took the charge for filthy lucre," in direct opposition to the injunction of the Apostle, 1 Pet. v. 2, nothing could be more natural than that they should be concerned about the number of their contributors.

Nor will it appear strange, if we consider of what kind of characters the greater bulk of professing Christians were composed, when whole nations were compelled by law to profess the faith, and coerced by punishment to submit to their spiritual rulers, that a great majority should have acquiesced in the will of their masters. So grievous was the plague and torment with which the rapacious rule of these "dealers in mysteries" was accompanied, that multitudes, regardless of the punishments denounced in a future state against the contemners of the sacred orders, would have braved that danger, could they have thus avoided the present evils; but they were reduced to a very different alternative—submission, or loss of worldly substance, with corporal punishment. It is easy to be seen which of these would be preferred by "the men who had not the seal of God in their foreheads." They chose rather to be reputed "alive while spiritually

dead
8.
as d
Dan
to av
Th
or tri
man,
morta
ing w
follow
they c
terrors
ing "t
others.
For
matters
cease,
torment
five mo
poly of

"The
battle; s
faces (w
and their
In the
like horse
ness, in a
for in that
can they
men?"
have alre
The resen
quality or
The hor
according

dead," Rev. iii. 1, than suffer the loss of all things for Christ, Phil. iii. 8. This very fact was predicted in the "Sealed Book"—"Such as do wickedly against the covenant shall he cause to dissemble;" Dan. xi. 32, making them to submit, hypocritically, to his authority, to avoid what was in their estimation a greater evil.

The torment which men were thus made to endure was not light or trivial—it was "as the torment of a scorpion when he striketh a man," that is, severe, of long continuance, unremitting, and often mortal. For an illustration of this, we need only recollect the unceasing wrangles and bloody contests in which the locusts involved their followers—the different contenders for spiritual rule, employing, as they chanced to gain the ear of the civil magistrate, the arms and terrors of the state to extirpate their rivals; and each in their turn having "the same measure meted to them which they had measured to others."

For five months these locusts were to be tormentors of mankind in matters connected with religion: not that their torment was then to cease, for we know that they were to have power to carry on the same tormenting system for 1260 prophetic years; but at the expiration of five months, that is, five times thirty days, or 150 years, their monopoly of the torture was to be invaded by another; of which hereafter.

SECTION V.—*Description of the Locusts.*

"The resemblance of the locusts (were) like horses prepared for battle; and for their heads (there were) as crowns of gold; and their faces (were) as faces of men; and they had hair as hair of women; and their teeth were as of lions," Rev. ix. 7, 8.

In the common version we read "the *shapes* of the locusts were like horses, &c.," but *homoïoma* signifies *similitude, resemblance, likeness*, in any respect whatever. In this place it cannot mean *shape*, for in that case the creatures spoken of would be horses: besides, how can they be like horses in shape, when they have "faces as faces of men?" Nor could they have any other kind of faces, since, as we have already seen, *men*, real men, are symbolized by the locusts. The resemblance here mentioned must therefore be in some other quality or attribute than that of shape.

The *horse*, in hieroglyphical language, has significations varying according to the appendages or accompaniments with which he is

introduced.* Among others, he symbolizes "immoderate violence, war, conquest, dominion;"† and here we are prevented, by the words employed, from giving any other sense to this symbol; for the horses to which the locusts are resembled are "horses prepared for battle."‡ The personages who make their appearance on the opening of the four first seals are all mounted on horses—they are all warriors, though one of them only obtains the ultimate victory, namely, the rider on the white horse—white being the emblem of justice (or righteousness), prosperity, and triumph. But the rider on the black horse, the representative of the same men that are here symbolized by locusts, is there portrayed not merely as a warrior, but by the "pair of balances,"§ as a merchant—an unjust merchant, like all who accompany or second their commercial projects with war; and, under this fifth trumpet, the same persons have also a double character assigned to them. By locusts, they are, as we have seen, symbolized as men in holy orders:—by horses—war-horses, they are represented as bent on conquest; for though "it was given to them, that they," themselves, "should not kill," but have that office performed for them by the secular power, they were not the less active in their murderous exertions in quest of spoil, victory, and dominion.

These locusts had "for their heads as it were crowns of gold."|| In the common version we read "on their heads as it were crowns like gold:" but *epi*, with an accusative, not only may, but generally ought to be rendered *for*, and the sense requires that it should be so translated in this place; and for the common reading "*hos stephanoi homoioi chryso*" (as it were crowns like gold), the MSS. in the proportion of 25 to 3, read, "*hos stephanoi chrysoi*," "as crowns of

* A bridled horse, for instance, represents passions under restraint;—and the Apostle James seems to refer to this, iii. 2, 3.

† Pierus, lib. iv.—See also Lancaster's Symbolical Dictionary, and Daubuz, p. 258—261, and 878.

‡ Does not the resemblance of the locusts to "horses prepared for battle," strikingly point to their pride, and vain confidence? Job xxxix. 19—25; Psa. xxxiii. 17, &c.

§ If, with Woodhouse (and some preceding authors), we render *zugos* by a yoke, which is the proper and primary sense of the word, in place of "a pair of balances," it will equally well describe the men intended: they are *tyrants*, hard taskmasters—a part of their merchandise is the bodies and souls of men, Rev. xviii. 13.

|| I here followed Griesbach's edition of the Greek text. The editors of the common text possessed but few MSS. of the Apocalypse. Erasmus had but one; Stephens only two; and it does not appear that Beza had the means of consulting more.—See Michaelis's Introduction to the New Testament, c. xii. § i.

* A le
into the c
period sta
of gold?
crowns lik
This gloss
and the v
text and th
† Amer
regal power

gold," or "as it were crowns of gold." By a trope common to all languages, *crowns* are here put for those who wear them; and the sense is simply this: the heads, leaders, sovereigns, of the locusts, are men wearing crowns; that is, *kings*. But "the crowns of gold" are here deteriorated by the word *hos* (as it were) being prefixed to them, a circumstance which must not be overlooked. That some sort of diminution of the royal prerogative is intended is obvious, and from this circumstance some might be inclined to consider the expression as signifying something short of royalty, namely *coronets*, namely those of the sacred orders—*mitres*. But we are precluded from applying the word *crowns* to anything short of regal power, not only by the known hieroglyphical signification of the term,† but by another circumstance, which ought to have great weight in settling the meaning of the Seals and Trumpets. In the next chapter of this prophecy, John is made to eat the book that has been opened, that is, to study and comprehend its meaning, and for this end—that he might be enabled to prophecy. His prophecies then relate to the same subjects as the book; but we do not find in them a reference to any other *crowns* but those that are regal:—of these, indeed, we find frequent mention, and we are plainly enough informed that it was by their means that the locusts were enabled to become such torments to mankind—"they gave their power and strength to the beast." They became the property of the locusts—their heads:—ruling only for their benefit—sacrificing the best interests of every other class in the community to the aggrandisement of the hierarchy. This fact removes every difficulty from the words now under consideration, which are a plain prediction that these locusts would not only be protected by crowned heads, but encroach so much on the royal prerogative, as to leave to the kings, by whose sufferance they existed, only the form and semblance of royalty—only that portion of power which, under their guidance and direction, might be best adapted to promote the ambitious and domineering pretensions of the

* A learned correspondent accounts for the corruption that has here crept into the common text in a very natural manner:—"A Greek reader at an early period starting the question, What can '*hos stephanoi chrysoi*' mean, as *crowns* of gold? wrote upon his margin, or interlined the answer, '*homioi chryso*,' crowns like to gold. This to a Greek ear, would explain the *hos* in a moment. This glossima, as in thousands of instances in the classics, crept into the text, and the vulgar reading is a clumsy tautology, arising from a combination of the text and the glossima.—*R.*

† Among the Romans, as also among the Egyptians, a *diadem* symbolized regal power.—*Pierus*, lib. xiii. c. 18.

sacerdotal orders.* When they employ them as their satellites and executioners, then, indeed, they extolled their power, anathematizing all who presumed even to murmur against lawless oppression:—but if these *puppet kings* dared at any time to attempt to shake off the fetters imposed upon them by their spiritual rulers, or, listening to the dictates of conscience, hesitated in any instance to perpetrate the most flagitious acts of wickedness, for *the good of the church*, they were then taught in whose hands that power was actually lodged, of which they were nominally the possessors!

These degraders of royalty “had faces as faces of men:” that is, though symbolized by locusts (to designate their profession) they are in truth men. The word *men*, employed as a general term, would also include the female locusts; but we are not left merely to infer their connection with the family:—“the locusts had hair as hair of women”—they had orders among them different from those who were shaven: witness the myriads of nuns who, in direct opposition to the injunction of Paul, 1 Tim. v. 24, were enjoined to lead a life of celibacy. But the sacred orders being symbolized—not directly *described* as men—the human “faces and hair” attributed to them must not be taken merely in a literal sense: they respect principally the assumed character of the locusts: their imposing aspect; the semblance of manly virtue and dignity, and the feigned modesty with which their most nefarious proceedings were to be veiled. That their claims to virtue and humanity are all dissimulation is intimated by a phraseology similar to that employed in the preceding clause: it is not said they had “faces of men,” but that “their faces were” as “faces of men—and they had hair” as “hair of women”—assumed characters which no more belong to them than the human face and hair belong to natural locusts.

This part of the description of the locusts agrees exactly with what was predicted in the “Sealed Book” (Daniel) respecting the “little horn.” He was to have something of human features:—“in this horn were eyes” like “the eyes of a man;” he was a “seer,” sagacious, and endued with foresight; he had also “a mouth—a speak-

* The locusts ruled the real crowned heads as if the crowns had been their own, and verified in their conduct and appearance the words of the Preacher:—“There is an evil which I have seen under the sun, as an error which proceedeth from the ruler: folly is set in great dignity, and the rich sit in low place. I have seen servants upon *horses*, and princes walking as servants upon the earth,” Eccles. x. 5, 6, 7.

* The
of good t
and retir
chariots
† One
produced
plished th
millions
into the v
prevent th
locusts, in
every mor
History of

ing," that is, "a human mouth ;—a mouth speaking great things," Dan. vii. 8. How does he employ this mouth? In uttering dark sentences viii. 23, flatteries, xi. 34, and "marvellous things against the God of gods," ver. 36.—From this it appears that the assumed modesty of the locusts, symbolized "by hair as the hair of women," (their hair is given them as a veil, 1 Cor. xi. 15,) is foreign to their true character—a veil assumed to hide and disguise the spirit that actuates them in all their proceedings; for in reality they have a "fierce countenance," (or, as the words might be rendered, "an impudent countenance"—that species of impudence which belongs to a harlot, as the word in the original imports) "and teeth as of lions—devouring the earth—destroying the mighty," (i. e. *kings*, three of whom they swallowed up,) and the holy people. Dan. viii. 24.

"And they had breastplates as breastplates of iron; and the sound of their wings as the sound of chariots with many horses running to battle." Rev. ix. 9.

The locusts, defended as with breastplates of iron, are qualified, during the period of their power, to repel every attack made upon their body. They had the power of the kings for their protection, as has been already noticed—the iron hand of injustice lifted up in their favour, under the violated name of law: nor were they restrained within any kind of limits—they had wings,* the marauding power of their "heads," to transport and extend their empire to every clime subjected to the dominion of the fourth beast;† which under its "ten crowned horns," the "heads of the locusts," still continues to "devour the whole earth, and tread it down and break it in pieces." Dan. vii. 23. Nor was the extension of their sovereignty a casual result of the conquests effected by "their heads" over those parts only of the earth, which, strictly speaking, never constituted a part of the proper body of Daniel's fourth beast; but, instigated by the

* The men signified by "locusts" held themselves out to be "ambassadors of good tidings," but how different is the representation of them, their embassy, and retinue, which is given by "the sound of their wings as the sound of chariots with many horses running to battle!"

† One instance shall suffice at present, out of thousands that might be produced. In the true spirit of barbarian zeal, the Spaniards, who accomplished the conquest of the New World by the slaughter of more than ten millions of the human species, forced multitudes of their wretched captives into the water; and, after baptizing them, immediately cut their throats, to prevent their apostatizing from the faith. Some of these pious disciples of the locusts, in virtue of a solemn vow, hanged or burnt thirteen human beings every morning, in honour of Christ and the twelve Apostles!—See *Edward's History of the West Indies*.

locusts, the heads themselves were so blinded with the common darkness as frequently to attack each other with the whole strength of their respective kingdoms for no earthly object whatever, but to rivet more closely on their own necks the chains which these infernal agents had forged for them and their people. Look at history—can a single war be produced that has taken place in Europe since the epoch of that darkness which gave power to the locusts, which had not its origin in the machinations of this body—or in which they or their heads did not contrive to introduce the name of that religion which preaches only PEACE?

The evils proclaimed by the preceding Trumpets had some limits—the third part of the creatures and ships in the sea—the third part of the sun and moon; but the plague of the locusts has no boundary—wherever they appear they carry their pestilence with them, and “torment those men who have not the seal of God in their foreheads.” “By reason of these false teachers, who have many followers, the way of truth came to be evil spoken of,” 2 Pet. ii. 2. While they had power, in the height of their prosperity, defended by their iron breastplates, to fine, imprison, and inflict corporal punishment on all who presumed to refuse submission to their will, none dared to testify openly against them but those only who were “sealed by God,” and who, in consequence, often sealed their testimony with their blood. Deterred by the punishments that awaited such a crime, those who groaned under the iron yoke of these tyrants, and yet could not endanger themselves by an open resistance, could not but feel, and as far as safety would permit, complain of the evils which they were made to endure. But those who inflicted them were “Ministers of the Christian religion” (so they blasphemously called and still continue to call themselves); is it to be wondered, then, that the deluded multitude, “the men not sealed,” whose ears have not been opened to hear the truth proclaimed by the *faithful and true witness*, should identify these men with Christianity, and in consequence “speak evil of those things which they know not?” Jude 10.

It could not be otherwise. They knew nothing of Christianity; for Antichrist never did, nor ever will teach *it*. But, ignorant as they were, they knew by “the work of the law written in their heart,” Rom. ii. 15, that the practices of these tormentors of mankind could not possibly be warranted by any dispensation issuing from infinite wisdom and goodness. Can we be surprised, then, to find, that as

the influence of *the locusts* declined, as they lost their power to torment that class whom "they would not suffer to die," but "compelled to live in their communion," that very class of men should at length become loud in their clamours, and, in proportion to the safety with which they might speak out, be active in proclaiming the true character of ecclesiastics?

Any cord, however strong, when loaded to the utmost that it can bear, will break, if only a feather be added to the weight. The "sacred orders," arrogant, presumptuous, and infatuated by the impunity with which they had not only trampled upon the people, but hurled kings from their thrones, dared, even after their real character began to be known, to maintain the strugg'e with the civil power. Was this to be endured by the great men of the earth, after knowledge had made such progress as to shew them that the claims of the locusts could not rest on divine authority—that the whole body was a creature of their own forming—that they themselves were "the heads" of this creature? Impossible. In their hearts they began to hate this beast of their own creation; nay, "it was put into their hearts to hate it" (Rev. xvii. 16); but the difficulty was, how to destroy it, without involving themselves in the same ruin, for in the darkness that gave birth to the locusts, the civil and gyllous institutions were so entwined and interwoven as to become "bone of one bone, and flesh of one flesh." No way appeared left to wrest from them their usurped power, and lodge it where it should always have remained, but gradually to lessen their importance, by allowing and encouraging men to expose the arrogance and wickedness of their groundless claims and pretensions. Hence the favour shown in many countries to the men who took the lead in that "revolution," commonly known by the name of the "Reformation; and hence the impunity with which others were permitted to disseminate writings, the apparent tendency of which was to undermine the Christian religion, and bring it into contempt, but which generally had for their real object the subversion of the power of the hierarchy.

On this subject I shall not insist at present, as I must hereafter go more into detail respecting the predicted destruction of the locusts; for power is given to them for only a limited period of time. We learn from the prophecies delivered by John, after he eat the open book, that "the power of the locusts," and that of "their heads" have one and the same duration: but in the Fifth Trumpet we have two precise

portions of that time mentioned—"five months" and "five months," which must not be passed over without particular notice. Of which in my next.*

* This, as far as the Editor has been able to learn, was the last of these Dissertations that was given to the public. It appeared in January, 1810. However valuable these may be deemed, not only for the able manner in which the subjects professed to be treated of are discussed, but for the light they throw upon the subsequent parts of the prophecy, the reading of them will doubtless multiply the wishes they excited in the Editor and others, that the Author had completed what he proposed, and published the whole in a connected form. And here it may not be improper to conclude with the plan which the Author laid down for himself in the end of his introduction, (although its insertion was deferred in the proper place, page 4,) that such readers as have not seen the original papers may understand what was his design, particularly as he has made various references to farther discussion under parts of the prophecy beyond those investigated in these pages. It was this:

"The order I propose to follow, in the observations which I have to offer on the Prophecies, will be,

I. To enquire what SEALED BOOK it was, which John saw opened by the LION OF THE TRIBE OF JUDAH, and the nature of its contents, as declared by the removal of its 'Seven Seals,' and the sounding of the 'Seven Trumpets;' and here I hope to prove that the sealed book was that of the Prophet Daniel, and that it is now an 'Open Book.'

II. To examine the book that has thus been opened, (viz. Daniel,) and show how exactly its predictions have been verified.

III. To explain the prophecies delivered by John, in consequence of his 'eating the book,' by the command of the Angel, after it was opened—prophecies which he was commanded to prophecy 'against many people, and nations, and tongues and kings.'

In the course of this investigation, I humbly hope,

1. To prove in the most plain and intelligible style, to the satisfaction of the unprejudiced, that all the leading periods of time, in which the wonderful events predicted by Daniel and John were to take place, are given in the books themselves; and that, therefore, the events must be found and ascertained by the dates, and not the dates by events assumed as the fulfilment of these predictions, which is an absolute inversion of the natural order of things.

2. To point out, and in many instances with considerable precision, those events which actually were an accomplishment of these prophecies;—and,

3. To ascertain, from the dates and the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, the period to which we are now arrived."

months,"
Of which

st of these
uary, 1810.
er in which
light they
them will
rs, that the
a in a con-
h the plan
uction, (at-
ch readers
his design,
nder parts
is:
to offer on

ned by the
s declared
Trumpets;
et Daniel,

and show

nce of his
ned—pro-
people, and

tion of the
wonderful
en in the
scertained
t of these
ngs.
ose events
period to